THE CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TRAGEDY

A Study in Religious Prejudice

Conrad Henry Moehlman, Ph.D., D.D.

James B. Colgate Professor of the History of Christianity,
The Colgate-Rochester Divinity School

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In a volume by Rabbi H. G. Enelow entitled *A Jewish View of Jesus*, presented to the library of the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School by Rabbi Philip S. Bernstein, the latter wrote: 'With the hope that it will help the followers of Jesus to understand the attitude of his own people toward him.' May this study enable both Jesus' own people and His followers to appreciate each other.

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PREFACE

SOME CHRISTIAN had to write this book. An apology to Judaism on the part of Christianity has been long overdue. The relation between Christianity and Judaism during the last nineteen centuries is an ethical problem which twentieth century Christianity can no longer afford to ignore. The Christian-Jewish problem may be approached from various angles. This study is concerned with its paramount issue, namely its religious aspect.

The brutal and outrageous persecution of the Jew by the Christian for the religious reason is a matter of historic record. To some of the facts this study will call attention.

There are two horns to the Christian-Jewish dilemma. Assume for a moment the Christian fundamentalist attitude toward the Bible. Let all its compositions be inspired, inerrant, and obligatory. Harmonize the variant gospel accounts of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Pay no attention to their discrepancies and utterly unhistorical elements. Paint the tragedy of Passion Week in the most lurid colors. Let the Jewish priests and people accuse Jesus of blasphemy and of sedition, torture him, and crucify him—even then, both according to the gospel of Jesus and the theology of the New Testament that God planned the cross for the salvation of man, the perpetration of the crime should have been forgiven by the followers of the Nazarene, the actual events should not have been exaggerated and expanded to

imaginary and legendary proportions and certainly the medieval and modern descendants of his people should not have been held guilty of their remote ancestors' folly.

Many Christians cannot today seize this soft horn of their dilemma. For they have acquired an historical attitude toward the Bible and know the results of its scientific study. Critical method has demonstrated beyond all contradiction that our gospels are ancient historical documents containing all the faults of such documents. The synoptic accounts of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus do not agree the one with the other. No one can bridge the chasm between the differing synoptic narratives on the one hand and the Johannine portrait on the other. All of the New Testament descriptions of the tragedy of Passion Week have undergone serious modification and expansion. Our Christian text books do not tell what happened in Jerusalem nineteen centuries ago. The Jews still possessed the right to try and execute persons transgressing their religious laws. The Jews did not crucify, they stoned or decapitated for blasphemy. The Roman procurator Pontius Pilate because of popular tumult and revolutionary tendencies among the followers of Jesus intervened and condemned Jesus on the charge of sedition. For decades after Calvary, Jerusalem Jew and Christian got along rather well together.

If these things be true, the teachings of Jesus demand that modern Christians acknowledge them and make a confession of sin because of the thousands and thousands of unjust statements found in their literature as well as for the revenge in many forms taken upon Judaism.

The student of history is amazed to discover that the results of the historical investigation of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus have not found their way into modern relig-

ious education, that text books are still being published which tell the story in the ancient gruesome way. Yet there must be millions of Christians who desire to know what really transpired at Calvary rather than to go on believing the fiction of Oberammergau.

As this investigation continued, and the case of Christianity in its relation to Judaism became more and more astounding, the composition of these chapters became an unavoidable duty.

Christianity has ever admitted its failures. It cannot claim perfection. The pages of the New Testament are filled with sin catalogues. The leaders of the church in every generation have confessed its mistakes, have regretted its imperfections, have reaffirmed its ideals, and summoned its membership to new attempts to realize them. There are only two tests which Christianity need fear. If Christianity in this twentieth century ceases to believe in its original ideals, its future will not be glorious. If Christianity, deceived by its achievements and its tradition, refuses to recognize what actually occurred back there, many will no longer walk with it. Out of a frank discussion of a distressing situation should come healing and a new life.

As we write, the Hitler regime promulgates enactment after enactment indirectly or directly concerned with the Jews of Germany. May Germany's Jews be spared further suffering and the Christian-Jewish tragedy not be heightened thereby.

CONRAD HENRY MOEHLMAN.

Rochester, N. Y., Good Friday, 1933

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To the many scholars, Jewish and Christian, without whose painstaking work this study could not have been undertaken;

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To the poets whose interpretations have clarified issues;

To the owners of copyrights and publishers of books and magazines referred to in these pages;

Especially to Harper and Brothers, Publishers, for permission to use *The Holy Bible: A New Translation* by James Moffatt;

The author's thanks are due.

The notes at the end of the volume record the names of the authors quoted or otherwise employed.

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THE CHRISTIAN-JEWISH TRAGEDY

THE PROLOGUE

JUDAISM CHALLENGES CHRISTIANITY

CHRISTIANITY has again come to the parting of the way. Two principal ethical problems face the church. One is concerned with its failure adequately to christianize its present relationships; the other has to do with its disregard of the unethical elements in its past.

1. *Some Unchristianized Areas of Christianity*

Three inherited unethical Christian attitudes involve the American Indian, the Negro and Judaism. In Helen Hunt Jackson's *A Century of Dishonor* and similar studies, the American Indian has had partial justice done him. As long as Albert Schweitzer continues his work at Lambarene in French Equatorial Africa, insisting that he is there to make atonement for the white man's injustice and inhumanity to the black man, Christianity will have before it an object lesson whose implications are all too obvious. (1)

But, strange to relate, Christian ethics has not had the courage to face the Christian-Jewish issue. The Christianization of the existing social order may be eloquently discussed without even a footnote upon Christian injustice to the Jew. The best Christian minds and hearts have analyzed Christian ethics, have been able to narrate at length the growth of Christian groups, churches, and nations without

alluding to this main ethical problem. The Christian ideal of genuineness, chastity, purity, freedom from hate, freedom from envy, love, humility and heroism may be exalted through one hundred printed pages without ever coming to grips with this case. The Christian conscience has never been made to feel this ancient and existing wrong. How can Christianity be so complacent in the presence of Christian injustice to Judaism!

Our foremost Christian writers have traced the historical roots of Christianity to the Hebrew prophets:

> 'A comprehension of the essential purpose and spirit of the prophets is necessary for a comprehension of the purpose and spirit of Jesus and of genuine Christianity. In Jesus and the primitive church, the prophetic spirit rose from the dead . . . The thought of the prophets was the spiritual food that he assimilated in his own process of growth. With them he linked his points of view, the convictions which he regarded as axiomatic. Their spirit was to him what the soil and climate of a country are to its flora. The real meaning of his life and the real direction of his purposes can be understood only in that historical connection.' (2)

But they have failed to make reparation for Christian cruelty to the descendants of these prophets. And the tragic consequences may be summed up in four pernicious words: Inquisition, Holy Cross Day, Ghetto, and Pogrom.

2. *The Shame of Christianity*

The Christian record regarding Judaism is written in blood in all the countries of Europe. It was 1791 ere the full rights

of man were granted the Jew in France, while the Jews of Holland had to wait until 1793; those of Germany and Italy until 1870; those of Turkey until 1908; those of Russia until 1917; those of Spain until 1931 for a complete freedom. It was 1885 when the ghetto of Rome was at last destroyed. In 1870, the Jews of Rome were compelled to petition a Christian pope for the abolition of the Ghetto in the Eternal City under the very shadow of St. Peter's! They had to perjure their souls with words of flattery in the hope of alleviating suffering becoming too intense. The petition read in part:

> 'Most Holy Father! The elders and the delegates of the Jewish community of Rome, faithful subjects of your Holiness, prostrate themselves before your exalted throne, and offer the assurance of the continued loyalty of their co-religionists. . . . In fulfilment of the duty imposed on them, the petitioners presume humbly and reverently to lay before your holy wisdom and mildness the present exceedingly wretched condition of their co-religionists. . . . Accustomed as the undersigned are to bless your name, they hope not to have spoken in vain to your fatherly heart of the sad lot still theirs; the insalubrity of the old Jewish dwellings; the direct and indirect obstacles to the free pursuit of the trades, the fine arts and the larger number of industries; the limited right to possess real estate; the denial on the part of some notaries of their right to act as witnesses; the alarming increase of poverty. . . .
>
> 'Hear us, O Holy Father, so that the Children of Israel may once again benefit by that noble gener-

osity, inseparably connected with your immortal name.' (3)

3. *Holy Cross Day*

Occasionally a poet protests against the Christian mission to the Jew. Robert Browning, for example, lets the Jews of Rome, driven to church to hear the bishop's sermon, vindicate their compelled acquiescence by repeating under their breath, *Ben Ezra's Song of Death.*

'Thou! if thou wast He, who at mid-watch came,
By the starlight, naming a dubious name!
And if, too heavy with sleep—too rash
With fear—O Thou, if that martyr gash
Fell on Thee coming to take thine own,
And we gave the Cross, when we owed the Throne—

'Thou art the Judge. We are bruised thus.
But, the Judgment over, join sides with us!
Thine too is the cause! and not more thine
Than ours, is the work of these dogs and swine,
Whose life laughs through and spits at their creed!
Who maintain Thee in word, and defy Thee in deed!

'We withstood Christ then? Be mindful how
At least we withstand Barabbas now! . . .
Let defiance to them pay mistrust of Thee,
And Rome make amends for Calvary!

'By the torture, prolonged from age to age,
By the infamy, Israel's heritage,
By the Ghetto's plague, by the garb's disgrace,
By the badge of shame, by the felon's place,
By the branding-tool, the bloody whip,
And the summons to Christian fellowship,—

'We boast our proof that at least the Jew
Would wrest Christ's name from the Devil's crew.' (4)

Occasionally too a Christian minister expresses his indignation in no uncertain terms, as when John Haynes Holmes says:

> 'For the whole conversion process, I have nothing but horror and disgust. It is to my mind an insult to the intelligence and character of the race that many of our Christian churches should be conducting regular missions for the Jews, as though these Jews, forsooth, were some kind of heathen, to be saved from everlasting damnation.' (5)

4. *Wanted: More Christian Confessions of Sin*

What the Christian world woefully lacks at the present hour of its crisis is more Roseggers and Brunners. Back in 1889, Rosegger was publishing *Heimgarten*. Some violent young anti-Semites urged him to fan the flames of hatred against the Jew. Instead, he penned an editorial addressed to 'Young Anti-Semites in Vienna'. He asked these young hotheads which one of them was without sin and thus entitled to cast the first stone. 'You say, Jews are not Christians! Well, are you? Are you loving and humble? You say, Jews are not Germans! Are you? Are you genuine, honest, industrious, just and thrifty?' (6)

More than a century and a quarter ago, Philipp Joseph Brunner, a Catholic doctor of divinity, dared to pray:

> 'Almighty, eternal God! I pray Thee for the welfare of a despised nation, which in the past has had to endure so much persecution, so much con-

> tempt. O! the misery of these unfortunate people seemed to so many a triumph of the doctrine of Jesus and to enlarge this triumph, their misery was increased. Every germ of civic and family good fortune was destroyed in this busy people. The religion of Jesus was made hateful to them, because so many confessors of Jesus were their sworn eternal enemies. Such an unworthy and hostile pride shall never ruin my heart. Since I, O my God, have learned from Jesus that ill persons are my brothers, I resolve to honor our common human nature and rights in them! Their misery and civic humiliation shall constantly summon me to desire to comfort them, to reduce their suffering, and through my participation in their fate, to help restore them from the cruel strokes of their former destruction.' (7)

And Israel deserves not merely pity and sympathy but justice.

5. *Some Reasons for Anti-Semitism*

The current literature of the world complains of Jewish separatism, provincialism, assumptions, pride, distinctiveness, exclusiveness, failure in adaptation, eternal reference to Moses, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, Hillel, and Spinoza, commercial ability, selfishness, nationalism, desire for publicity, materialism, sentimentalism. (8)

But did not our Christian ancestors compel the Jew to develop the traits their descendants criticize? Which racial group has not had national aspirations? After proclaiming the right of self-determination, the world over, would American Christians deny it to Israel? After centuries of

exploitation by blackmail ought not the Jew to have become painfully exacting? Extraordinary cunning and risks have confronted the Jew throughout the millennia. He was forced to work his wits in barter and trade. He was steeped in contempt. Naturally he became saturated with it. He was persecuted and abused beyond endurance. Why deny him the natural right of developing the traits that alone enabled him to survive?

6. *The Ultimate Reason*

The tyro in the study of the Christian-Jewish problem soon discovers that the ultimate reason for anti-Semitism, although the term itself is of very recent origin, is Calvary.

Jesus of Nazareth was crucified as king of the Jews. The cross became the symbol of Christianity. It adorns prayer chains, amulets, churches, furniture, Bible, hymnals, banners, coins, spears, shields, crowns, the official garb of clerics. The sign of the cross has magic power. Toward the close of the seventh century, the image of the ordinary lamb was removed from Christian icons and replaced by an image of the lamb of God in human form. Since then Christians have possessed not merely the cross but the crucifix, have been gazing upon the Savior upon the cross.

Indeed, the cross was 'discovered' in numerous passages of the Old Testament where it does not appear. The *Dialogue with Trypho*, of the mid-second century, is filled with such arguments. The *Epistle of Barnabas* turned the 318 men of Abraham's household into the cross! For did not ten equal the first letter of Jesus and eight, the second? Did not three hundred equal the *tau*-shaped cross? What ancient Christian dared contradict this author by pointing out that the words, '*And Abraham circumcised ten and eight and three hundred*

men of his household,' upon which his entire allegorical argument rests, are not to be found in Genesis? (9)

Christianity made the Jews and their leaders the chief villains in the passion of Jesus. The ordinary man of Central and Eastern Europe still devoutly believes that Jews use Christian blood in the preparation of their unleavened bread. Hitlerism is rooted in religious prejudice.

Was not Professor Kallen's comment upon the recent disavowal of anti-Semitism by a group of prominent Christians warranted?

> '. . . the magnanimity and courage of this message from these leaders, is of a greatness and splendor without parallel. For if it means what it says, it means a repudiation of certain fundamentals in the Christian tradition and the Christian *mores*. If it means what it says, it means a revision of Christian doctrine in its essentials. Perhaps I am wrong, but to me Christianity and anti-Semitism imply each other. Anti-Semitism is involved in the doctrine and discipline of the Christian system. To reject and to condemn anti-Semitism requires a transmutation and revaluation of Christian attitudes and teaching. For these impose anti-Semitism, because of the status they assign the Jews in the mystery of the redemption. Jewry is given a central and devilish rôle in this mystery; and the Christian generations first learn about Jews and Jewry as the enactors of this rôle. They are the villains of the Drama of Salvation . . . '

Did he not sufficiently reinforce it with the testimony of Grand Duke Alexander of Russia?

'It was not my fault that I hated the Jews, the Poles, the Swedes, the Germans, the British, and the French. I blame the Greek Orthodox Church and the notorious doctrine of official patriotism—beaten into me by twelve years of study—for my inability to treat with friendliness all these nations that had never committed a crime against me personally.

'Until I came into my first contact with the church, the word "Jew" signified for me an old smiling man who delivered chickens, turkeys, ducks and other poultry at our palace in Tiflis. I felt a genuine sympathy for the kind expression of his wrinkled bearded face, and could not believe that he traced his ancestry straight back to Judas. But my reverend teacher persisted in his daily descriptions of the sufferings of Christ! He played on my childish imagination and succeeded in making me see a murderer and a torturer in every worshipper of Jehovah. My timid attempts at quoting the Sermon on the Mount were waved aside with impatience. "Yes, Christ did advise our loving our enemies," said Father Titoff, "but that should not affect our views of the Jews!" Poor Father Titoff! In his clumsy provincial way he was merely imitating the preaching of his betters who were promoting anti-Semitism for over eighteen centuries from the pulpits of the house of God. The Catholics, the Episcopalians, the Methodists, the Baptists, all these supposedly Christian creeds and denominations have equally contributed to the de-

spicable cause of fostering hatred, while the anti-Jewish legislation of Russia found its principal support among the high priests of the Greek Orthodox Church . . .' (10)

7. *When Christianity Becomes Consistent*

The Christian accusation against Israel, then, has been that it participated in the events of passion week nineteen centuries ago. Suppose that participation were superlatively exaggerated. Even then it would be difficult to understand why twentieth century Judaism should be held responsible for a first century sin! This is going many generations beyond the third and fourth generation of the second commandment. The inconsistency of making the death of Jesus legal, voluntary, predetermined and predestined as an atoning sacrifice for the sin of the world and yet villifying and persecuting those accused of bringing his case to the attention of the Roman procurator has not as yet dawned upon the authors of numerous text books used in Christian nurture courses. Is 'revenge for Calvary' consistent?

In Disraeli's *Tancred*, the lady of Bethany in Palestine first asks the modern Christian crusader, 'Pray, are you of those Franks who worship a Jewess: or of those other who revile her, break her images, and blaspheme her pictures?' Tancred replies with emotion, 'I venerate, though I do not adore, the mother of God.' Thereupon the strange lady puts these questions: 'Is the present plight of the Hebrew race penal and miraculous; suppose the Romans had not crucified Jesus, what would have become of the Atonement: if, as you Christians insist, the crucifixion of Jesus was preordained by the Creator of the world before a human being had drawn breath, why blame those who fulfilled God's beneficent

intention; should not Christians bless instead of persecute those who have saved the human race?'

Eva might have asked another question, why did Christians transform the judge and executioner of Jesus into a saint? (11)

This is how many a Jew feels on Good Friday:

O man of mine own people, I alone
Among these alien ones know thy face,
I who have felt the kinship of our race
Burn in me, as I sit where they intone
Thy praises,—those who, striving to make known
A God for sacrifice, have missed the grace
Of thy sweet human meeting in its place,
Thou art our blood-bond and our own.

Are we not sharers of thy passion? Yea
In spirit-anguish closely by thy side!
We have drained the bitter cup, and, tortured, felt
With thee the bruising of each heavy welt.
Every land is our Gethsemane.
A thousand times have we been crucified. (12)

8. *Then and Now*

In the *Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer lets the prioress relate a most blood-curdling story of how

This false Jewe him hent, and huld ful faste,
And kut his throte, and in a pute him caste

as a sample of medieval atrocity never committed by Jew but reported at every cross-road by Christians.

Though fiction to begin with, the matter became a tragedy for many a hapless Jewish group.

With torment and with schamful deth echon
This provost doth these Jewes for to sterve,
That of this moerder wist, and that anon;
He wolde no such cursednesse observe;
Evel schal have, that evyl wol deserve.
Therefore with wilde hors he dede hem drawe,
And after that he heng hem by the lawe. (13)

Marlowe, contemporary of Shakespeare, who at twenty-nine lost his life in a tavern brawl, four years earlier published his very popular *The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta* to inaugurate the modern age of dramatic caricature of the Jew. The villain Barabas is described as a consummate fiend, grotesque, hideous, disgusting and diabolical as he insists that 'it's no sin to deceive a Christian.' His Macchiavellian schemes show what hellish plots could engage Christian minds of the late sixteenth century. Shylock of *The Merchant of Venice* was soon to follow. (14)

The New England Primer of some three centuries ago contained this:

Yet, to read the shameful story,
How the Jews abus'd their King,
How they served the Lord of Glory,
Makes me angry while I sing.

It was Spring, 1931. The members of the graduating class of an American theological seminary were grouped before their president, listening to his fond farewell. For three years these young men had been studying the teachings of Jesus, the history of Christianity, a modified Calvinistic theology, and religious education. They were leaving to announce to a perplexed world Jesus' message concerning

the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of men, forgiveness, and love. But this was in part the final exhortation:

> 'They called themselves "the disciples", "the saints", "the faithful", "the elect", "the way", but never Christians.
> By their disdainful fellow Jews they were called "the sect or heresy of the Nazarenes", or just Nazarenes, without the sect.
> Like their teacher they were often just called names, opprobrious names, names that hurt. He was called "a gluttonous man and a wine bibber"; he was called crazy, mad; he was called Beelzebub, or one of Beelzebub's minions.
> Recorded in the Mishna, the written form of what in New Testament times was the oral teaching of the Scribes, are some twenty contemptuous references to Jesus: "That Man", "that fool", "Absalom", "the man they hanged", "the magician", "the people's seducer", "the blasphemer", and other names like those.'

Perhaps these graduates recalled that the friends of Jesus, not the scribes and Pharisees, called Jesus 'crazy, mad'; that his own brethren refused to believe in him. Possibly the president assumed that these young men knew that the Mishna is a 'collection of Halachoth completed somewhere about A. D. 220'; that its earliest tradition regarding Jesus originated late in the first century of the Christian era. Some comparison between the duty of the orthodox Jew of the first century and the Christian Fundamentalist of the twentieth century might have been added. What an illustration this is of average Christian preaching utterly igno-

rant of the reconstruction of the relation between Jesus and Judaism now accepted by history.

9. *Facts*

Until recently Christian historians had not critically examined the canonical gospels. What is worse—few Christians had taken the trouble to notice that these gospels took shape around and subsequent to the destruction of Jerusalem in C.E. 70. For three decades after the death of Jesus, Jerusalem Jew and Christian lived on fairly decent terms, the one with the other. Jerusalem Christians visited the temple, offered sacrifices, and even kept the passover. The Christian believed Jesus of Nazareth the predicted messiah; the Jew could not. In connection with the catastrophes of C.E. 66-73 and C.E. 132-135, which destroyed the Jewish state, the break between Christian and Jew became more and more pronounced. What occurred? The Christian proceeded to exonerate Pontius Pilate, the judge and executioner of Jesus.

For the trial of Jesus there is only one primary source, the Gospel according to Mark. In this gospel the trial before the Sanhedrin is not historical. But taken as written, no blasphemy occurred. Even the expanded descriptions of the trial of Jesus in all the gospels agree that Jesus was not put to death for claiming to be 'Son of God' but because Pilate concluded that he had advanced the claim of being 'King of the Jews'. It has been demonstrated beyond all question that scourging and crucifixion were a Roman method of capital punishment. Judaism stoned for blasphemy. Rome scourged and crucified for sedition. Judaism did not crucify. Deuteronomy 21:22 has to do with exposure before God after death.

10. *The Christian Record Once More*

This investigation will show that after C.E. 70, Christian history was revised to the advantage of Pilate. The Old Testament was allegorized to permit a new Christian interpretation of its contents. The text was sometimes tampered with. Thereupon Judaism was accused of destroying the expanded readings! Statements in Josephus were modified. The narrative of the gospels was likewise altered. A picture entirely out of drawing resulted. Pilate was celebrated in the creed as in charge of Judea when Jesus was crucified. The name of the executioner of Jesus is perpetuated throughout the world today by the repetition of the Apostles' Creed. He became the hero of Christian legend; at times received into heaven and again punished for his crime. He was represented as the author of a report of the trial of Jesus made to Tiberius! He prayed to Jesus! He became a disciple of Jesus! He painted a portrait of Jesus! Pagan Pilate and his wife were transformed into Christians and thereupon into saints. Every year on June 25, the Ethiopian Christian church commemorates the saintship of the Pilates.

Had the Christians only stopped here! But they did not. They added Jewish atrocities which had never occurred. They encouraged feelings and attitudes toward Israel altogether opposed to the teachings of Jesus. They engaged in persecution of the Jews, employing torture and mutilation and murder. They humiliated and isolated Israel.

Would that all this were only of the past! Alas! it is also of the present. Today when it is possible accurately to describe the events of the last week of Jesus, some courses in Christian religious education still teach children in the United States that Jews brought on the destruction of their capital city and all their sufferings since then by putting

Jesus to death. This is being taught in parochial schools, in Sunday Schools, in week-day schools of religion, in books published a decade ago for the first time, in books which have run through many editions. Sometimes the vivid description of Jew or crucifixion develops in the child enduring ill-will. And then, a few pages later, these same children pray, 'Dear Lord Jesus, our Teacher and Savior, we thank thee for thy coming to save the world.' Must not ethical confusion result from such religious education? The excellent ethical teaching given the youth of the United States by Public Education is sometimes nullified by one-half hour instruction in such a religious education class. Modern denominational editors of Sunday School leaflets should not be permitted to introduce into their comments the bitterness and vindictiveness which developed after C.E. 70 as though present in the feelings of the humble followers of Jesus in C.E. 30.

11. *When Christianity Repents*

The established facts demand more than a moratorium upon this Christian misinterpretation of the Jew. The genuine disciple of Jesus may not halt here. This past and present injustice cannot be smiled away. Christian repentance in sackcloth and ashes is overdue. The usual Christian story of Friday of Passion Week demands drastic revision. And a Christian confession of sin without any 'ifs' and 'buts' might help convince some of Jesus' own people that the Master's ethical ideal is being seriously pursued by some of his followers.

Indeed, Christianity might be very agreeably surprised if it accepted this challenge by history honestly to narrate what happened in Jerusalem on Nisan 14 some nineteen hundred

years ago and thereafter throughout the Christian world.

From at least the time of Graetz, the Jewish response to the historical interpretation of the Bible has been most gratifying. Among recent Jewish writers acknowledging that the new Jewish appreciation of Jesus is in part due to the Christian rediscovery of the 'strict humanity of Christ', is Rabbi Ernest R. Trattner in his *As a Jew Sees Jesus*. (15)

12. *Toward a Mutual Understanding*

There are important differences between Judaism and historical Christianity. Judaism has never been able to grant that Jesus was not only the Messiah but in 'some unique way shared the divine nature as the Son of God.' Judaism has stressed conduct more than dogma. Judaism has been more interested in this life than life in a world to come. But Micah's 'do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God' appears in many Christian calendars, while Paul's definition of Christianity as faith expressing itself in love could be accepted by Judaism. The possibility of a mutual appreciation between Christian and Jew has been clearly discerned by Herford:

> 'Christianity and Judaism can never blend without the surrender by the one or the other of its fundamental principle. But they could learn to understand and respect each other, and recognize that each religion has God's work to do, and cannot do it without the help and presence, yes, even the sympathy of the other. And it would greatly help to this end if it were recognized that the hard things spoken and written of old, belonged to the old time alone, and have no meaning now—Let the dead past bury its dead.' (16)

PART ONE

Pilate Becomes a Christian Saint

Chapter I: *The Pilate of History*

Pontius Pilate, Roman procurator, judge and executioner of Jesus of Nazareth, referred to only a few times beyond the Christian record! Pontius Pilate immortalized by the Apostles' Creed, perpetuated by medieval Christian folklore, remembered annually in Ethiopia to this day as a Christian saint! What caused this transformation? What were its consequences? Is it too late to substitute fact for fiction? Must the modern world continue the prejudices accumulated by eighteen hundred years of legend? Is there hope for a new Christianity which will take its past seriously? Could reconciliation between Christianity and Judaism occur, if the sober facts in the tragedy which is Calvary were known? Questions like these persist in presenting themselves for answer. The purpose of this investigation is to acquaint the Christian world with their existence.

1. *At Last a King!*

An ass upon which no one had ever sat was tethered in a street near Jerusalem some nineteen centuries ago awaiting the approach of the Messiah. Several disciples of Jesus of

Nazareth secured the colt and placed their garments upon him. Then Jesus mounted him. This the gospel of Mark relates.

Numerous pilgrims—about 125,000, it is estimated(1)—journeying to the city of David, of some 55,000 population ordinarily, for the celebration of the passover, the feast commemorating Israel's deliverance from Egyptian bondage, were reflecting upon the present enslavement under mighty Rome. They recalled the word of the prophet:

Rejoice indeed, O maiden Sion,
shout aloud, dear Jerusalem.
Here comes your king,
triumphant and victorious,
riding humbly on an ass.

Just then, rounding a bend in the road, some of them caught sight of a man upon an ass. A few of them had seen him in Capernaum of Galilee. Would he not now restore the rule of David? Urged on by tremendous emotion they spread upon the road their garments and also tender green shoots cut in the nearby fields. They marched along, the procession becoming larger and larger. Then they began to acclaim the long awaited king:

Hosanna
Blessed with the name of the Lord be he that cometh
Blessed be the impending reign of our father David
Hosanna in the highest. (2)

In that vibrant throng, shouting that Jesus was king, were interested table-companions of the Galilean, Peter and John and James and Judas. For some weeks now they had been convinced that Jesus was the predicted Messiah and would shortly deliver Israel from the overlordship of Rome.

This surely was the crisis! Power must now be seized! Had not Jesus finally surrendered to their interpretation of his function? Had he not mounted the messianic colt? Was he not accepting the plaudits of the nationalists? Jesus of Nazareth entering Jerusalem as a Davidic prince was a new Jesus. Hitherto he had consistently rejected and repudiated every suggestion of nationalism. At last, he had yielded! At last, he was consenting to take the throne!

But will Rome approve the coronation? Rome ordinarily scourged and thereupon crucified kings not of her own choosing. What will it be this time—a crown of gold or another gibbet?

2. *The Two Utopias of Israel*

The later history of the Hebrews was characterized by two hopes; one was nationalistic and messianic; the other was apocalyptic, transcendental, overworldly, altogether supernatural.

The messianic hope involved the reign of God. Its classic description was:

> 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.
>
> 'And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

> 'And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.' (3)

The agent of God would be a descendant of David known as the Messiah. The people would hold sway with him. He would be preceded by a forerunner. The ten tribes would reappear in Palestine. Jerusalem would regain its ancient splendor. The iron heel of Rome would be removed. The land of Israel would become independent. Its enemies would be destroyed.

Apocalypticism was of another pattern. Recent historical and comparative research has thrown considerable light on its genesis and development.

Not so very long ago the last book of the New Testament was regarded as the one and only book of mystery. Thereupon someone happened to observe that the Book of Daniel was likewise a volume of mystery. Ere long the relation between Daniel and the Johannine apocalypse was discovered. At this point investigation camped for a time. The wider area of apocalypticism remained unexplored. But the successive publication and study of several Jewish apocalypses, such as Enoch and Baruch and Ezra, inevitably raised the problem of background. Gradually and reluctantly it came to be conceded that the New Testament apocalypse must be approached by way of the numerous Jewish apocalyptic deposits. More recently the comparativist has taken the offensive and traced apocalyptic instinct and feeling back to exceedingly primitive times and demonstrated the underlying philosophy to be a universal human hope.

The human race usually experiences its present and its immediate past more or less as a period of enslavement; it peers into the future to obtain the outline of a golden age; it longs for the coming of the Redeemer. Sometimes the race experience and expectation are referred to as conflict, struggle, sorrow, suffering, and the coming period as one of joy and bliss. Sometimes the elements of the apocalyptic equation are tehom, Yahweh, paradise; sometimes chaos, Redeemer, ideal state; sometimes python, Zeus Soter, golden age; sometimes dragon, lion of Judah, no more sea; sometimes sin, Savior, salvation. The terminology varies; the experience and hope agree.

No one should any longer think of beginning the apocalyptic development with B.C.E. 175 and concluding it about C.E. 135—that period represents only one significant Jewish stratum.

Jewish apocalypticism was born out of the misery and disappointment attending the succession of deportations and overlordships, culminating in the attempt of Antiochus IV Epiphanes to hellenize Judaism. It represented the despair which threw Israel back upon the miraculous intervention of God. It divided history into two great periods called *this aeon* and *that aeon*. Between the two aeons cosmic woes, such as commotions, slaying of rulers, epidemics of disease, famines, earthquakes, wars, rapine, revolutions, would shake the earth. Truth would be hidden. Faith would cease. The sun would shine by night and the moon by day. The sap of the trees would turn to blood. Stones would speak. Birds would migrate. The fish of the sea would decay. Fires would cover the earth. Son would turn against father; daughter against mother. God would declare war upon Satan. The incarnate devil would oppose the Messiah.

Thereupon the final assize with God as judge of the world would take place. The dead would be raised. The just would enter paradise. Darkness, annihilation, eternal torment in Gehenna or some such punishment awaited the godless. But at last the earth would be renewed.(4)

Occasionally in this weird imagery, God is represented by a preexistent and transcendent being called Son of Man.

Was Jesus a nationalist or an apocalyptist? Did he preach nationalism and particularism or the establishment of the sway of God by cataclysm?

3. *Jesus Refuses to Endorse Nationalism*

At the moment of his baptism by John in the Jordan, Jesus experienced the call of God. A little later when John was cast into prison, Jesus began to announce the approach of the kingdom of God. After the decapitation of John, Jesus greatly increased his prophetic activity. For a brief time the people were enthusiastic over him. Some may even then have thought in terms of kingship for him. But his refusal to accept the popular acclaim resulted in a cooling off of fervor and the desertion of many nationalist propagandists.

It is generally granted that the chief purpose of Jesus was the proclamation of the kingdom of God. For him that kingdom was in some sense already present. The expulsion of demons demonstrated the kingdom's presence. It was exerting permeating and transforming power and enjoying a marvellous expansion through his words and his works.

But in its fulness, the kingdom was mainly future and miraculous and cataclysmic. It would come as a terrible surprise. Just as in the days of Noah and Lot, the deluge and fire and brimstone from heaven destroyed the wicked, so would it be at the approaching crisis. Two would be in the

field; one would be taken, the other rejected; two would be grinding at the mill-stone; one would be taken, the other left. The selection would be terrible. No one except the Father knew the precise hour of the kingdom's fatal approach, but the present generation would witness the final catastrophe. 'I tell you truly there are some of those standing here who will not taste death till they see the coming of God's Reign with power'. 'The present generation will not pass away *till all this happens*'. 'The Reign of God is nearly on you'. At the end of the world the angels would go out and separate the evil from the just and fling them into the furnace of fire. Moreover, the Son of Man would be the helper of God.

There are apparently three emphases here which are too often completely identified. The kingdom of God is the general concept. The Consummation of the Age is one element in the perfect establishment of the Reign of God. Another assumes the presence of the mysterious Son of Man. His presence is immediate. Out of this faith the dogma of the Parousia developed.(5)

4. *The Disciples Ardent Nationalists*

Day after day the disciples of Jesus listened to their Master's discourse upon the apocalyptic kingdom. But they understood him not. As little as they regarded him as supernaturally born, so little were they now interpreting him in terms of transcendence, pre-existence, metaphysics. They were interested in escaping from the overlordship of Rome, believers in a Reign of God which would bring emancipation and freedom to Palestine. For ordinary people, the practical and present and immediate outweigh the theoretical and future and remote. For nine decades now Palestine had been

under the iron heel of Rome. Rome was the new Edom. Nationalist fanaticism had swept the country. Revolt after revolt had been and would be organized. Freedom from the domination of the Roman empire, a descendant of David ruling in place of the Roman procurators—this was the kingdom of God desired by the earliest adherents of Jesus. The disciples of Jesus were ardent nationalists.

At that moment of crisis in northern Galilee, when Jesus had put the question, 'Who do people say I am?', only to be informed that the people were confused and did not know, Peter knew. 'You are the Messiah,' he said. All Jesus need do apparently was to mount the vacant throne of David and crush Rome. Peter *was* naive! But Jesus repudiated the suggestion.(6)

Somewhat later the sons of Zebedaeus, James and John, confirmed the interpretation of Peter. For they went to Jesus, saying, 'Give us seats, one at your right hand and one at your left hand in your glory.' And the remaining disciples registered a vigorous protest against this wire-pulling for favorite places in the cabinet of the new king.(7)

Above all in the joyful throng in attendance upon the triumphal entry, the disciples of Jesus were supremely happy. For the reluctant Master had yielded. He would head the nationalist revolution, they were certain!

And then Jesus threw over the tables of the money-changers in the temple at Jerusalem. Now everyone knew that Rome's revenue was by this act of violence reduced. Could there be any doubt that Jesus would take the next step? Of course, Jesus would be king. The inner circle knew that.(8)

Even the Jewish leaders were becoming alarmed. 'If we let him alone, like this, everybody will believe in him *and*

then the Romans will come and suppress our holy Place and our nation.'(9)

Possibly the people had already begun a revolt against Pilate. At the trial of Jesus before Pilate, mention is made of 'a man called Bar Abbas in prison, among the rioters who had committed murder during *the* insurrection.' Which insurrection? Why not one in connection with Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and cleansing of the temple?(10)

The disciples of Jesus were also ready to use force to put their leader upon the throne of David.

5. *Jesus Again Repudiates Nationalism*

But as at Caesarea Philippi, so again at Jerusalem Jesus irrevocably repudiated nationalism, and his fate was sealed. The final decision of Jesus was made during Passion Week. It is witnessed to by his reply to the question, 'Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' The expectant disciples of the Nazarene naturally anticipated 'certainly not' as the answer to that puzzle. Of course, Jesus would disown a tax that represented the overlordship of Rome. Yet what they heard him say was, 'Give Caesar what belongs to Caesar; give God what belongs to God.' So they must continue to pay taxes to Caesar?(11)

Must they then abandon Jesus as Messiah? Or could he still be compelled to take a more favorable attitude toward nationalism? Jesus was the Messiah! Had he not preached with authority? Had he not healed the sick and exorcized demons? When he spoke to them or looked at them, were they not mysteriously moved? Jesus was the Chosen One! Why not force him to admit his messiahship?

One of the Twelve, Judas Iscariot, brooded over the matter. Then he went out into the night, sought out the Jeru-

salem authorities and betrayed Jesus. Why? The debate still rages as to whether he became enraged at Jesus' approval of paying the tax to Caesar, whether he desired the silver which would be handed over, or whether he believed so thoroughly in the messianity of Jesus that he concluded to expose his companion in order that he might exhibit his messianity.

Jesus also went out into the night. He entered a garden called Gethsemane. He wrestled with God over the matter. Hitherto he had always emerged victorious in arguments with his opponents. Could he not do so again? Could he not even now escape from Jerusalem and return to Galilee? What is so perplexing about the trial of Jesus is his failure to deny the charges against him. 'Are you the king of the Jews?' 'Certainly.' Did this reversal of attitude on the part of Jesus occur at the moment of his arrest by a mob with swords and cudgels? Jesus had pleaded in great agony of soul with God: 'Take this cup away from me. Yet not what I will but what thou wilt.' *Did Jesus conclude that the arrest was God's answer to his prayer?* God desired him to die a martyr to his cause! Well, in that case, he must not attempt to escape the cross.

That Jesus was not anticipating death prior to the experience in Gethsemane is indicated by some words spoken a few hours before and recorded in Luke 22:16-18: 'And he said unto them, I have much desired to eat this passover with you before my suffering: for I say unto you, I shall not eat it again until it is eaten in the kingdom of God. And he received the cup and when he had given thanks, he said, Take this and divide it among yourselves: for I say unto you truly, I shall henceforth no longer drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God has come.' In the night

of his betrayal Jesus was still expecting the kingdom of God to be established on this earth without his death.(12)

Thus Jesus was through his action converting the idea of a Messiah who should hold sway into a Messiah who must suffer. Jesus in Gethsemane apparently accustomed himself to the scandal of the cross.(13)

Judas kissed Jesus that night in the presence of the mob. Jesus was arrested. The procurator Pilate would soon attend to the accused.(14)

6. *Pilate Enters*

The Roman procurators of Judea always graced with their personal presence the celebration of the principal festivals of Judaism in Jerusalem. They expected protests of some sort and usually were not disappointed. Ordinarily they resided in Caesarea. But in the day of horse-drawn vehicles there were too many miles between Caesarea on the Mediterranean and Jerusalem in the heart of Judea.

The hints in the gospel narrative that the appearance of Jesus in Jerusalem at the time of the Passover feast was a summons to sedition against Rome are supported by the Slavonic text of Josephus. During the last quarter century much attention has been given to this variant version of the *Jewish War*. Between sections 174 and 175 of the second book of the traditional text of Josephus' *Jewish War*, this manuscript has a considerable addition upon the 'Wonder-worker's' ministry, trial, and crucifixion. A portion of the section relating to the trial of Jesus follows:

> 'And many of the multitude followed after him and hearkened unto his teaching; and many souls were in commotion, thinking that thereby the Jewish tribes might free themselves from Roman

hands. Now it was his custom in general to sojourn over against the city upon the Mount of Olives; and there, too, he bestowed his healings upon the people.

'And there assembled unto him of ministers one hundred and fifty, and a multitude of the people. Now when they saw his power, that he accomplished whatsoever he would by a word, and when they had made known to him their will, that he should enter into the city and cut down the Roman troops and Pilate and rule over us, he disdained us not.

'And when thereafter knowledge of it came to the Jewish leaders, they assembled together with the high-priest and spake: "We are powerless and too weak to withstand the Romans. Seeing, moreover, that the bow is bent, we will go and communicate to Pilate what we have heard, and we shall be clear of trouble, lest he hear it from others, and we be robbed of our substance and ourselves slaughtered and our children scattered." And they went and communicated it to Pilate. And he sent and had many of the multitude slain. And he had that "Wonder-worker" brought up, and after instituting an inquiry concerning him, he pronounced judgment: "He is a malefactor, a rebel, covetous of kingship." And they laid hands on him and crucified him contrary to the law of their fathers.'

Whatever conclusion criticism may ultimately reach as to the historicity of the Slavonic Josephus in general or this variant in particular, Pilate entered the situation because he judged Jesus guilty of stirring up a tumult among the Jerusalem throngs.(15)

But how did Rome happen to be overlord of Palestine during the life of Jesus? Why was it exercising oversight through procurators?

7. *How Judea Became a Roman Procuratorship*

The tragic end of the Jewish state came under the Roman emperor Hadrian in 135 of the Christian era, after Rome had ruled Palestine for two centuries. They had been marked by many incipient revolts and two disintegrating wars.

In the year 63 before the Christian era the fate of the Jewish nation was settled. For the Roman general Pompey then appeared before the walls of Jerusalem. With the assistance of traitors his army was admitted into the city and the king's palace delivered to him. Slight resistance was encountered at the temple. Few Romans fell; 12,000 Jews perished. Pompey executed the ring-leaders of the opposition, imposed an indemnity of 10,000 talents, and left behind a sufficient force to ensure obedience to Rome.(16)

Julius Caesar appointed Herod governor of Galilee. By 37, Herod ruled as king. Among Herod's architectural achievements was Caesarea Augusta, excellent port on the Mediterranean to the south of Mount Carmel. He adorned it with sumptuous palaces, temples, theatre, amphitheatre, splendid arches, altars and statues of Augustus and Rome. But the glory of Caesarea was a breakwater, two hundred feet wide, some five hundred feet from the shore, enclosing a basin always free from the tempests of the sea, where great fleets at anchor lay. Its population was chiefly Gentile.

Caesarea became the capital of the Roman province of Judea. Here the procurators had their official residence, guarding the peace of Palestine with an army of 3,000 soldiers. It was some sixty miles from Jerusalem.(17)

Caesarea played no mean rôle in Christian history. For two years Paul looked out from its prison walls. Later the bishop of Caesarea was metropolitan of Syria. The town was the prize of the Mohammedan and Christian crusaders, passing from one to the other until finally demolished in 1265.

Upon the death of King Herod, in four before the Christian era, chaos reigned in Palestine with remnants of the veterans of Herod rioting against the imperial forces.(18) King after king arose. One Judas organized a multitude of desperate men who looted Sepphoris in Galilee. Simon, a former bond-servant of King Herod, fitted a diadem to his own head. Supported by the people, he burned the royal palace at Jericho to the ground and laid waste the surrounding region. Athronges also 'because he was a tall man and excelled others in the strength of his hands, was so bold' as to insist upon becoming King Herod's successor.

A decade after the death of King Herod, Rome made Judea and Samaria a procuratorship. The first of the unholy four who preceded Pontius Pilate in that office was Coponius. He had to suppress the revolt of Judas the Galilean and Zealot who objected rather violently both to the census arranged in the interest of a better system of taxation and to the introduction of Roman soldiers. These Zealots refused to remain defeated. At this time the Samaritans were excluded from the temple because they had profaned it with dead men's bones. The second procurator of Judea was Marcus Ambivius under whose sway Salome, the sister of King Herod, died. The last procurator to be sent to Judea by the emperor Augustus was Annius Rufus. The emperor Tiberius selected as his first appointee Valerius Gratus who remained in charge of Jewish affairs for eleven years, finally appointing Joseph Caiaphas high-priest.(19)

8. *Pilate Reaches Caesarea*

In the year twenty-six of the Christian era, Pontius Pilate was sent to Judea by the emperor Tiberius. He remained there a decade, for Tiberius deemed it wise to permit 'governors who had already enriched themselves' to remain in office since the people would suffer less from them than from newcomers whose avarice had not yet been satisfied. Pilate was of equestrian rank and the Samnite gens. Treacherous, vicious, and disloyal Sejanus had promoted his appointment. If Philo may be trusted, Pilate was inflexible, merciless, obstinate, guilty of corruption, acts of violence, rapine, insults to the people, cruelty, murder of untried and uncondemned persons, never-ending inhumanity, and most pernicious passions.(20)

Pilate favored rough treatment. The gospel of Luke refers to some 'Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.' (21) Pilate appropriated the sacred treasure known as *corban*, under tabu because devoted to Yahweh, in order that he might construct aqueducts several hundred furlongs in length. When the enraged Jerusalemites entered the court before the palace of Herod to object to the seizure of the sacred temple treasure, Pilate disguised some of his soldiers as civilians, let them mingle in the crowd, and at a given signal, pummel the defenseless multitude with night clubs. Many Jews perished from hard blows; others were trampled to death; and Pilate claimed the round.(22)

9. *Pilate and Images*

One of the longest commandments in the decalogue is the second. It proscribes the manufacture and worship of im-

ages of any kind. Centuries of struggle preceded the Hebrew conquest of idolatry. Idols had not always been 'scarecrows in a field, they cannot say a word; they have to be carried for they cannot move a step.' Prophet, priest, poet, Pharisee, and prohibitory policies had to form an entente to banish idolatry from Israel.(23) Superstitions succumb slowly. Israel had paid heavily to merit the description of Tacitus that the 'Jews acknowledge one God only and conceive of him by the mind alone, condemning as impious all who, with perishable materials, wrought into the human form representations of the Deity. That being, they say, is above all and everlasting, neither susceptible of likeness nor subject to decay. In consequence they allow no resemblance of him in their city much less in their temple.'(24) Two scores of Hebrew idealists were cremated by Herod for pulling down and destroying the large costly golden eagle which Herod had erected over the great gate of the temple.(25) Hebrew iconoclasm finally classified idolatry as one of the three cardinal sins and forbade even mental images of God. To dispose of an idol properly one must sink it in the Dead Sea. Monotheism and idolatry are incommensurable.

Pilate cared naught for all this. He loved his images. Jerusalem must not be without them. Hence, one night Pilate had some images of Caesar called ensigns brought into the city of David. Next morning the entire town was in an uproar. From the villages about the capital, country folk came pouring in. Multitudes walked the sixty miles to Caesarea to beseech the procurator to remove the hated images. For five long days and nights they lay prostrate. Meanwhile Pilate surrounded the praying group with soldiers and threatened them with death, if opposition to the presence of ensigns in Jerusalem were continued. Forthwith the Jews

offered their necks the stroke to feel. Before such invincible obstinacy, the wrath of Pontius Pilate cooled down, and the taunting images were removed from Jerusalem.(26)

10. *Pilate the Judge and Executioner of Jesus*

This brief outline of events in the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate to the morning of that eventful day when he became the judge and executioner of Jesus fails to reveal a hesitating, halting, always only half-convinced official. Instead, he appears to be a man of blood and iron who would not fear to act in any situation. The ordinary interpretation of Pilate may have been colored too much by nineteen centuries of Christian history. Because the influence of Jesus survived Calvary, the crucifixion of Jesus by Pilate became a major event in the history of western civilization. For Pilate the command to scourge and crucify Jesus was a single item in a day's bloody work. Tacitus summarizes the entire transaction in less than a sentence: 'the founder of the Christians was Christ, who during the reign of the emperor Tiberius was executed by the procurator Pontius Pilate.'(27) A line in an ancient police record was the first official reference to Jesus of Nazareth! It read: 'A.U.C. 783, April —, Jesus of Nazareth, king of the Jews, scourged and crucified.'

Jesus of Nazareth went to his death upon a charge of revolution. In sons of the gods, Pilate was not interested. The appearance of another claimant of the Jewish, indeed of the world, throne made an immediate trial necessary. The gospel of Mark has preserved the main line of investigation.

> 'Pilate asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
> He replied, "Certainly."
> Pilate replied, "Would you like me to release the king of the Jews?"

> Pilate asked them again, "And what am I to do with your so-called king of the Jews?"
> The inscription bearing his charge was:
> The King of the Jews.'(28)

Pilate examined a next-to-nothing Galilean, a man from Nazareth who did not count; he became convinced that the charge of claim to kingship had been sustained; humiliated the accused, mocked Jesus by placing him upon the judgment seat as if he were the judge and thereupon casually ordered the scourging and crucifixion of him who would be known thereafter as 'the founder of the Christians'. (29) It was neither the first nor the last time in the history of humanity that the employment of violence guaranteed the rapid growth of the 'crushed movement'.

And when the days of the feast were over, Pontius Pilate drove down to Caesarea, congratulating himself and Rome upon the ease with which he had ended this tumult.

II. *At a Roman Crucifixion*

The Romans were familiar with different types of execution. Rabbi Akiba was not nailed to a cross, but burned piece by piece.

> 'they tore out his flesh piece by piece with hot irons, with tongs of iron heated in the oven. They burned him piece after piece to death. And as he died the only thing that came from his lips was, "Hear, O Israel, the Eternal our God, the Eternal is One." With that on his lips he expired and before his death, he said to his disciples who were weeping: "Weep not for me. I have been asking myself what is meant by the phrase: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all

thy love, and with all thy power.' I give my life—
that is all my power and I show you my love for
God by dying for the sanctification of His Name''.' (30)

Crucifixion had been practiced by various ancient peoples such as the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Persians and Greeks. Darius crucified the leaders of rebellions. Hannibal crucified a guide who had misled him. Survivors of the Spartacan uprising to the number of 6,000 were crucified along the road from Capua to Rome. Before, during, and after the Jewish revolts against Rome, thousands were crucified. Horace could jokingly refer to crucifixion: 'If any man should punish with the cross a slave, who being ordered to take away the dish, should gorge the half-eaten fish and warm sauce, he would be a madder man than Labeo.' The Romans may have derived the method of crucifixion from the Carthaginians. They at first reserved it for slaves and the vilest of criminals.

The Romans used three types of crosses; the four-arm rectangular or Latin cross, the three-arm or T-shaped cross where the upright did not extend beyond the cross-piece, and the cross whose beams met at an acute angle. Both the author of the *Epistle of Barnabas* and Clement of Alexandria assume that the cross used in the case of Jesus was of the T-type. The cross was so constructed and located that the victim upon it would be raised only a few inches above the ground in order that the crucified might be more effectively insulted and struck.

After the capital sentence had been imposed, the one to be executed was scourged and mocked and jostled. Thereupon a placard announcing the cause of death was pinned to him or a herald proclaimed the offense to the gathering curi-

ous. Uprights, for the attachment of cross-pieces, nailed to stumps of trees or firmly imbedded in the earth, were always available at the regular places of execution. The condemned carried only his cross-piece to the place of execution. Arrived there, he was deprived of all his clothes and stretched upon the ground. The cross-beam was pushed under his head and the hands bound with ropes or fibres until nails could be inserted. The cross-piece with its victim was now raised to the notch in the upright and nailed tight. The condemned one's body was set astride a peg in the vertical beam. There was no foot-rest. Whether spikes were driven through the feet as well as through the hands is a very much debated question. The Romans were certainly not attempting to make dying any too pleasant for the crucified. The Gospel of John implies that Jesus hung from his two hands and the peg, for Thomas is asked to put his finger only in his hands and his hand only into his side. Moreover, the gospel of Peter describes the descent from the cross as consisting merely of the 'drawing of the nails out of the hands of the Lord'.

Over the head of the crucified was posted the reason for the punishment. A guard was stationed near the cross to prevent the removal of the suffering one by relatives, friends, or humanitarians. Death might not come for days, since it had to result from exhaustion coupled with hunger and thirst. Millions of flies immediately closed in on any exposed point of the bleeding body. Crucifixion in any warm climate was exceedingly hideous and loathsome. Breaking of legs or thrusting a spear into the body of the crucified might be resorted to if the guard tired of waiting for death to end the agony of the slowly dying criminal. The dead body was left upon the wood to be consumed by birds and beasts of prey unless friends decided to rescue it.(31)

And this method of execution was practiced by the Romans three centuries longer.

12. *The Legality of the Crucifixion of Jesus*

Was the trial of Jesus legal? Was the method of procedure of the Roman procurator regular? Was the verdict of death according to law? A portion of the sentence of death was attached to the cross: 'Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews'. He had been mocked with the name of king, crowned as king, robed as king.

More than six centuries ago, Dante penned a pacifist pronouncement entitled *de monarchia*. In this tract the great Italian poet insisted upon the necessity of the Roman Empire. He demonstrated that the Roman empire was established by God to rule the world by appealing first to the miracles attending its founding and then to the fact of Christ's death under the empire. For if the Roman empire did not have jurisdiction, the death of Jesus was illegal. But if that death must be regarded as illegal, Christ did not on Calvary expiate the sin of Adam. Dante contended that the entire theory of redemption as formulated by Christian theology rests upon the legality of the death of Jesus.(32)

Six decades ago, Sir James Fitzjames Stephen raised the question, 'Was Pilate right in crucifying Christ?' and answered, 'I reply, Pilate's paramount duty was to preserve the peace in Palestine, to form the best judgment he could as to the means required for that purpose, and to act upon it when it was formed. Therefore, if and in so far as he believed in good faith and on reasonable grounds that what he did was necessary for the preservation of the peace of Palestine, he was right.'(33)

The examination of the legality of the sentence of Pilate by Professor A. T. Innes won immediate recognition.

> 'A claim of Jesus merely to found a universal religion might no doubt, in practice, have come into collision with the law of Rome. But his claim to found a kingdom . . . seems to me to have been essentially inconsistent with the public principle of that law. Christianity, in short, was incompatible with the Roman public law, and that not merely because its contents were different from those of the old religion of Rome but because its claim to universal individual acceptance and public confession was in conflict with the unlimited and unbalanced sovereignty of the Roman State . . . On these very points the Roman State was afterwards to come into conflict with Christianity. It now came into conflict with the author of Christianity . . . For in point of fact, when Pilate ultimately sent Jesus to the cross, it was as claiming to be king and on the original charge of acting *adversus majestatem populi Romani*. The judgment was legal . . . Whatever Caesar's deputy may have thought, the claim of Jesus was truly inconsistent with the claims of the state which Pilate represented.'(34)

Various recent students of the problem as Henri Regnault, Paul Roué, and Richard Wellington Husband for different reasons confirm the general conclusion of Innes.

Husband, for example, says:

> 'The arrest was legal, for it was conducted by the proper officers, acting under instructions from the Sanhedrin . . . The hearing by the Sanhedrin was

> legal, for it was merely a preliminary hearing, and was not a formal trial . . . The course of trial in the Roman court was legal, for it harmonized with the procedure shown in the sources to be that pursued by governors of provinces in hearing criminal cases. The conviction was legal, and was justified provided the evidence was sufficient to substantiate the charges, and the records do not prove the contrary. But the accounts of the trial are so incomplete that it cannot be demonstrated whether the evidence would be considered adequate by an unbiased Roman lawyer, not under stress of surrounding excitement and mob impulse.'(35)

13. *Pilate's Last Massacre*

Pontius Pilate survived the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth by several years. His imperial master, if he heard concerning the matter at all, did not criticize the death sentence. Pilate's removal from office awaited a massacre at Mount Gerizim.

Shortly before the year 36 of the Christian era, a Samaritan enthusiast, the anonymous spiritual ancestor of Joseph Smith of Mormon fame, promised to reveal to believers the hiding place of the sacred vessels which Moses had concealed upon holy Mount Gerizim. The masses love to play 'follow the leader'. A motley throng rapidly gathered. But a good salesman does not sell at twenty when there is a good chance of obtaining thirty-six. Alexander of Abonoteichos postponed the shearing for weeks. It was a painful wait but worth it. The slow progress of the mad Samaritan and his shrieking associates gave Pilate sufficient time to despatch horsemen and infantry to the scene, to seize the strategic

roads, and to kill or scatter all the frenzied Samaritans ere they reached the summit of their holy hill. But the remainder of the population could not understand why religious enthusiasm should be identified with political conspiracy. These fanatics, Samaria argued, were not inciting to revolt against the Roman empire. Hence the Samaritans sent a commission to Vitellius, the governor of Syria, who agreed with this criticism of Pilate and ordered the procurator to Rome. Ere the boat carrying Pilate to the Eternal City entered the harbor of Puteoli, the emperor Tiberius joined his ancestors and thus could not sit in judgment upon the appointee of Sejanus.(36)

Here history halts. Pontius Pilate is back in Italy after a stormy procuratorship of ten years in Judea. Because what happened to Pilate after this was not known, rumor and legend could proceed unhindered.

CHAPTER II

The Pilate of Folklore

In the second century of the Christian era, Celsus composed his *True Word*, a keen analysis of the relationship between Judaism and Christianity and a scathing attack upon the claims of the latter. When the Christians rose to power in the western world, they destroyed this polemic against them. But Origen had replied to Celsus and quoted copiously from the *True Word* in his refutation. Consequently, historical criticism has been able to recover most of the text of the original essay.

Celsus was unfamiliar with anything out of the ordinary connected with the life and career of Pontius Pilate subsequent to the crucifixion of Jesus. For Celsus insists that the death of Jesus was not avenged by any god. No cruel fate was in store for the judge who condemned Jesus. Pentheus, who had no respect for the Bacchus worship and proscribed its rites, paid the penalty for his presumption. Pentheus went mad and was torn in pieces. But Pilate lived serenely on. He held sway half a dozen years longer. 'No god avenged Jesus'!(1)

But prosaic Pontius Pilate must become a hero to satisfy the medieval hagiographer. Lacunae always invited his attention. The silence of his sources was a veritable *deus ex machina*. The medieval myth-maker had in Pilate a subject which could easily be touched up.

As early as the second century the Christian imagination begins to function. Justin the Martyr pretends to know

about *Acts of Pilate*.(2) Tertullian confirms the tale. Soon all manner of events that never took place are associated with the career of Pilate. A few of these inventions of Christian folklore must be mentioned, if we would appreciate the approaching sainthood of Pilate.

1. *The Alleged Suicide of Pilate*

The doubtful honor of announcing the suicide of Pilate goes to Eusebius, fourth century historian of Christianity. His statement might almost be regarded as a late Christian reply to the criticism of Celsus.

> 'It is worthy of note that Pilate himself, who was governor in the time of our Saviour, is reported to have fallen into such misfortunes under Gaius [37-41 C.E.] whose times we are recording, that he was forced to become his own murderer and executioner, and this divine vengeance, as it seems, was not long in overtaking him.'(3)

'There is your answer, Celsus! "No god avenged Jesus"? The Christian god did. Pilate committed suicide.' Unfortunately this report was not abroad in the time of Celsus. And Origen was unacquainted with it. That great protagonist of Christianity would never have overlooked such data when haughtily challenged by sneering Celsus. The followers of the satirist would have heard to their sorrow all about the divine intervention in case of Pilate. Alas, the myth of the suicide of Pilate begins to circulate two and one-half centuries too late to be regarded as history!

2. *The Explanation of Pilate's Suicide*

A German scholar, von Dobschuetz, has pointed out that the 'suicide of Pilate' is merely a transfer of the suicide rec-

ommended by the emperor Gaius to the Syrian legate Petronius, to the judge of Jesus.(4) Gaius had ordered Petronius to place the emperor's statue in the temple at Jerusalem. Petronius, being on the ground and observing the murmurings against the intended sacrilege, recalling what had happened to Pilate for doing less, and fearing a rebellion against the empire for such a transgression of the second commandment, was bold enough to intercede at Rome in behalf of respect for Jewish scruples. When Marcus Agrippa supported the view of Petronius, his imperial majesty relented, sending a notorious message to his dear Petronius: 'If thou hast already erected my statue, let it stand; but if thou hast not yet dedicated it, do not trouble thyself further about it . . . for I have now no occasion for the erection of that statue.'

But before taking the somersault backwards, Gaius directed Petronius to rid the long-suffering world of himself; 'seeing thou esteemest the presents made thee by the Jews, to be of greater value than my commands, and art grown insolent enough to be subservient to their pleasure, I charge thee to become thy own judge, and to consider what thou art to do, now that thou art under my displeasure; for I wish to make thee an example to the present and all further ages, that they may not dare to contradict the commands of their emperor.'

Fortunately for Petronius, an epistle telling him that Gaius had joined the overworldly Roman emperors reached him before the epistle ordering him to commit suicide. He did not fear dead Gaius and therefore decided to remain on this side of the Styx a little longer.(5)

Since Gaius had ordered someone over in Palestine to commit suicide, why not let it be Pontius Pilate, a later

Christian opined. And now it is in many text books! Why not believe it, then?

3. *Another Version*

There is another, much later, version of the suicide of Pilate. This time it is the emperor Tiberius who orders Pilate to prison under sentence of a shameful death. Pilate much prefers to take things into his own hand and escapes the intended penalty by killing himself with his own knife.

But Tiberius was not done with the dead procurator. To a disgraceful death a more disgraceful burial could be added. Pilate was securely bound to a great rock and sunk in the river Tiber. No rest for the wicked! His malignant and filthy body was filled with malignant and filthy spirits, all rejoicing together, churning up the waters and causing such terrible lightnings and tempests, thunder storms and hail that all men were kept in horrible fear. Hence, Pilate was drawn out of the river Tiber and carried in derision down to Vienne and sunk in the river Rhone. Now Vienne was called the road to Gehenna, the entrance of hell, the place of cursing. But Pilate was too wicked for Vienne. The Rhone would not endure him. All the cataclysms which had occurred in the Tiber took place in the Rhone. The evil spirits worked in shifts to plague the people of Vienne. So the body of Pontius Pilate was hauled out of the waters once more and taken to the vicinity of Lucerne near *Mons Pilatus* for interment. Thereupon, Lucerne was troubled by the aforesaid visitations. In desperation some strong men of Lucerne removed Pilate's body and sank 'him in a certain pit surrounded by mountains, where to this day, *according to the account of some,* certain diabolical machinations are said to bubble up.' Every good Friday, Pilate is raised to 'sit and

wash unavailing hands.' Present day guides will point out a lake upon the top of *Mons Pilatus* where Pilate drowned himself. And guides do not lie.(6)

And yet Pontius Pilate, suicide and Satan for Lucerne, could become a Christian saint in Ethiopia.

4. *The Veronica Legend*

How did the emperor Tiberius happen to order the execution of Pontius Pilate? Tiberius was sick, grievously sick. No Roman physician succeeded in correctly diagnosing his illness. Their remedies effected no cure. The emperor was rapidly failing. Something must be done immediately. Just then rumor reached Tiberius of Jesus' power over demons and over diseases. The emperor sent an envoy, Volusianus, to Pilate to arrange for Jesus' journey to Rome to cure him of his malady. But the emperor's ambassador reached Jerusalem years after the death of Jesus. Poor Pilate had to inform the imperial messenger that Jesus had been crucified.

As he returned to his inn, Volusianus met a certain woman who possessed a Jesus' portrait of magical potency. He was informed that Jesus himself had impressed his likeness upon this cloth for her. The imperial legate commanded Veronica, this was the woman's name, to accompany him to the palace of Tiberius in Rome.

Caesar was told that if he would devoutly gaze upon the magical picture of Jesus, his health would be immediately restored.

> 'Caesar, therefore, ordered the way to be strewn with silk cloths and the picture to be presented to him. As soon as he had looked upon it, he regained his former health.'

Naturally, Tiberius became interested in Jesus of Naza-

reth. He learned how Jesus had gone about doing good and how Pilate had cut short his career and ministry by sending him to the cross. The enraged emperor summoned his underling to Rome for trial and punishment. In due season Pilate reached Rome and was ushered into the emperor's presence. But Pilate also knew his magic. At the moment of the crucifixion of Jesus, Pilate had confiscated the seamless tunic of the Galilean teacher. This he wore whenever danger approached, and it made him invulnerable. So he had slipped it on before going in to greet Tiberius. And Tiberius who but a moment before had been so enraged at Pilate discovered that he could not now speak unkindly to him. So the emperor sent the procurator from his presence. Immediately, his anger blazed against Pilate terribly. Pilate was summoned again. The emperor was serene again. The emperor marvelled at his inability to berate Pilate, to say nothing of examining the situation which had resulted in Pilate's sentence of death upon Jesus.

Pilate might have escaped the wrath of Tiberius, had he not after a time become a little careless about putting on the magic robe of Jesus. That oversight made it possible for the anger of Tiberius to blaze out against him. The trial ensued. Pilate's guilt was established and the condemnation to a most disgraceful death followed.(7)

This legend is believed still. Christian art is not a little to blame and Christian story books much more.

5. *The Mary Magdalene Myth*

According to a medieval Christian myth, developing upon the basis of gospel references to Mary Magdalene, the emperor Tiberius himself killed Pilate. This bit of fiction circulated in the Orient.

In the midst of her wailing over the death of Jesus, Mary Magdalene, anticipating modern Hollywood, decided to go to Rome in person and tell the emperor all about Pilate and the godless Jews. Hastening to the capital of the ancient world, she meets Dr. Galen! The emperor, deeply moved by the recital of Mary, damns Pilate and the rest. A messenger, Raab by name, goes to Caesarea with 2,000 soldiers to arrest Pilate and bring him to Rome.

> 'I have been exceedingly distressed at the reports that have reached me: a woman, a disciple of Jesus, has been here, called Mary Magdalene, out of whom he is said to have cast seven devils and has told of all his wonderful cures. How could you permit him to be crucified? If you did not receive him as a God, you might at least have honored him as a physician. Your own deceitful writing to me has condemned you . . .
> 'As you unjustly sentenced him, I shall justly sentence you and your accomplices as well.'

The messenger of Tiberius ordered all the Jewish males slain, the defilement of the women, and the arrest and deportation of the Jewish leaders and Pilate. Beheading, crucifixion, slow death by enclosure within a fresh bull's hide awaited the condemned. The Christians were subscribing to the primitive theory of many for one! They had not reached the level of a tooth for a tooth. At last only Pilate survives. The emperor refuses to see him because a condemned criminal who looks upon Caesar's face must be pardoned. Hence Pilate is locked in a cave. A little later the emperor goes hunting, in his excitement chasing a hind to the very door of Pilate's cave. At last Pilate will see the emperor's face

and escape death? Pilate peered but it was too late. The emperor had already released the arrow which killed Pilate instead of the hind.(8) Tiberius was not a very good shot.

6. *Pilate's Medieval Popularity*

Heroes are claimed by many places, the place of birth, the place of death, the place of stopping-over for the night, the place of exhortation, the place of an evening meal, the place of good-bye to his love, and the many places where he never even arranged to go. Homer was born at Smyrna, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Chios, Argos, Athens, Kyme, Jos, Pylos, and Ithaca. Dun Lethglasse claimed the body of 'Saint' Patrick. Had not two untamed oxen conveying his body halted there? But Saint Columba discovered Patrick's body at Saul. And cannot Armagh convince all comers that Patrick desired to be buried there?

Just so, Pilate became ever more popular in medieval legend and story. The folklore of three countries finally claimed him. France, Spain and Germany refused to surrender their candidate for immortality. Such a man could have been born only in our country! And districts in the separate countries contended for honors in the matter of Pilate's birth. Pilate was a son of Pila, daughter of a miller of Mayence. Yet the town of Forscheim formerly was able to exhibit Pilate's red pants in proof of his birth there! Otto von Freising could quote some poetry which should have closed the debate. The jingle ran:

Forschemii natus est Pontius ille Pilatus,
Teutonicae gentis, crucifixor omnipotentis.

'Famous Pontius Pilate who crucified the Almighty was of Teutonic blood and born at Forscheim.'(9)

We who are unacquainted with fairies and witches and magic fail to recall that what is legend for the twentieth century was sober gospel truth between the time of Augustine and Luther.

CHAPTER III

The Christian Reinterpretation of Pilate

The Greek and Latin churches first fashioned an apologetic for Christianity by appealing to Pilate's reputed refusal to condemn Jesus. But after Christianity had won its right to exist, Oriental and Occidental Christianity returned to legends emphasizing the guilt of the Roman judge of the founder of Christianity. The Ethiopic church, however, has remained pro-Pilate to this day. This reinterpretation of Pilate begins to appear about four decades after Calvary. The destruction of Jerusalem by Titus produced a crisis for Christianity as well as for Judaism.

1. *Rome Discovers Christianity*

For almost forty years, the Roman imperial government identified Christianity with Judaism. Inasmuch as the Jews up to 70 C.E. enjoyed special religious exemptions in their relation to the Roman empire, the continuing confusion of the two cults protected Christianity and provided the opportunity for the new religion to send its roots down into the soil of its environment so that later on it could not be uprooted.

The separateness of Christianity was only very gradually discovered and in various ways. Local collisions between Jews of the diaspora and the Christians were of frequent occurrence. (1) The Christians again and again annexed persons who through months and years had been prepared for affiliation with Judaism. At Antioch the followers of Jesus were

first called 'Christians'.(2) They called themselves 'brethren' or 'those of the way'. This nickname became a title advertising the new cult. The Romans were always suspicious of secret convocations and evening meetings.(3) The Christian evening meeting was not only somewhat closed but was sometimes prolonged until midnight. Pliny writing from Bithynia to the emperor Trajan definitely refers to Christian meetings before daylight.

Moreover, the Christians boldly criticized existing religions and the present order of things. They emphasized the approach of a great world catastrophe. The accusation of incendiarism was lodged against the Christians in connection with the fire at Rome in 64 C.E. Tacitus relates that Nero

> 'falsely charged with the guilt and punished with the most exquisite tortures, the persons commonly called Christians, who were hated for their enormities. Christus, the founder of that name, was put to death as a criminal by Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius; but the pernicious superstition, repressed for a time, broke out again, not only through Judea, where the mischief originated, but through the city of Rome also, whither all things horrible and disgraceful flow, from all quarters, as to a common receptacle, and where they are encouraged. Accordingly, first those were seized who confessed they were Christians; next, on their information, a vast multitude were convicted, not so much on the charge of burning the city, as of hating the human race. And in their deaths they were also made the subjects of sport, for they were covered with the hides of wild

> beasts, and worried to death by dogs, or nailed to crosses, or set fire to, and when day declined burnt to serve for nocturnal lights.'(4)

Nero's action was local, yet it left a deep impression throughout the empire and summoned Roman officials everywhere to stricter surveillance of Christians.

When Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E., the Jewish nation ceased to exist and the Jerusalem temple tax was diverted to the Capitoline Jupiter. The collectors of the tax discovered many who refused to pay that tax although the official registers described them as adherents of Judaism.

The secret meetings of the Christians, the salutation of brother and sister, the kiss of peace and the 'this is my blood' of the communion ritual gave rise to rumors of ritualistic cannibalism and promiscuous sex relations among the Christians. These accusations were very damaging to Christianity and helped establish its uniqueness.

> 'I hear that they adore the head of an ass . . . Now the story about the initiation of young novices is as much to be detested as it is well known. An infant covered over with meal, that it may deceive the unwary, is placed before him who is to be stained with their rites: this infant is slain by the young pupil, who has been urged on as if to harmless blows on the surface of the meal, with dark and secret wounds. Thirstily—O Horror! they lick up its blood; eagerly they divide its limbs. By this victim they are pledged together; with this covenant of wickedness the Christians are covenanted to mutual silence . . . On a solemn day they assemble at the feast, with all their children, sisters, moth-

> ers, people of every sex and every age. There, after much feasting, when the fellowship has grown warm, and the fervor of incestuous lust has grown hot with drunkenness, a dog that has been tied to the chandelier is provoked, by throwing a small piece of offal beyond the length of a line by which he is bound, to rush and spring; and thus the conscious light being overturned and extinguished, in the shameless darkness, the connections of abominable lust involve them in the uncertainty of fate.' (5)

With these accusations of alleged crimes, commercial antagonism should be mentioned as another reason for the discovery of the uniqueness of Christianity on the part of the Roman empire. The presence of Paul at Ephesus resulted in the burning of books of magic and in an economic riot staged by the silversmith Demetrius because of the loss of revenue from the manufacture of silver shrines of Artemis. (6) And in distant Bithynia, Pliny noticed that his action against the Christians meant a rise in stocks in the cattle market.

2. *Rome Versus Christianity*

The ordinary inhabitant of the Graeco-Roman world could not understand why the Christians disowned the gods who had made Rome mighty and upon whose goodwill their prosperity depended. These Christian atheists who would not worship the gods of Rome and were too pacifistic—were they good citizens, were they patriotic?

Having discovered the separateness of Christianity and being under popular pressure to render a verdict upon the strange delusion which was Christianity, the Roman gov-

ernment nevertheless was exceedingly wise and cautious in its method of dealing with the Christians.

To the middle of the third century, Rome handled the Christian problem through imperial rescripts. Trajan deemed adherence to Christianity worthy of death. Septimius Severus made the adoption of Christianity a crime. Maximinus Thrax prescribed the death penalty for those responsible for Catholic instruction.

There were only two general persecutions against Christianity; one enduring a decade under Decius and his successors; the other continuing here and there for less than a decade under Diocletian and his associates.

Until the edict of Constantine in the fourth century, conversion to Christianity was interpreted as treason against the laws of the Roman empire. The imperial government became more and more aware of the fundamental antagonism between Christianity and itself. As Sohm discerned:

> 'Rome, that is paganism, and Christianity stood face to face. To the old pagan world, the State represented the highest good. Moral virtue was identified with the active service of the state. To live and to die for the commonweal was the whole duty of man. Therefore in that worship of the Emperor which the Roman world had borrowed from the most ancient customs of the East, Paganism found its last and highest expression. The Roman emperor was the incarnation of the idea of the State. The altar raised to him was consecrated to the worship of that which, for Paganism, was the highest moral force, the power of the State. To the new views which the Christians put forward with reckless determination, the worship not only of

> idols, but of the emperor (that is, of the State) was irreconcilable. To the Christian the highest of all things was not the almighty Caesar, not the Roman Empire, not the Roman nation. To the Christian the Highest was, before all, not of this world, for his longing was fixed upon a better. With Christianity a new theory of the world came into history, challenging all others to open combat . . . For this reason Christianity was dangerous to the State, in the old pagan sense. It struck at the very foundations of the ancient State—that State which, with its unlimited and illimitable power, claimed to regulate the whole outer and inner life of man. Virtue was attacked, virtue in the ancient sense of love for the commonweal as the highest good.'(7)

3. *Revision of the Christian Verdict*

The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple by Titus signified not only the discovery of the difference between Christianity and Judaism by the Roman government but also Christianity's arrival at complete self-consciousness and the commencement of a struggle upon two fronts, one directed against Rome in the interest of survival, the other directed against Judaism in the interest of Christianity's independence from the mother religion and choice by God as his church. Christian hatred of Judaism began when Christianity felt its contrast to Judaism and its superiority over it.

Engaged now in a death struggle with all-powerful Rome, it was to the advantage of Christianity to transform earlier and good emperors, who because of their devotion to their country were far from being enthusiastic over the religion which meant the empire's disintegration, into friends of the

nascent church. The historian of Christianity must constantly sift the Christian accounts of the actions of the emperors lest he represent Tiberius as moving in the senate to receive Christ among the Roman gods or Marcus Aurelius as informing the senate that the prayer of many Christians in his army caused a rain to fall which refreshed his soldiers but frightened the Germans with lightning. For Marcus Aurelius neither recognized the legality of Christianity nor punished the accusers of the Christians.(8)

It was very opportune for the Christian apologist to convert the judge and executioner of Jesus into an advocate for him, into a witness to the innocence of Jesus, to his miracles, to his undeserved crucifixion, and even to his resurrection. Thus Christianity finally painted a completely unhistorical portrait of Pontius Pilate.

The significant thing to remember is that the documents in the New Testament referring to Pilate were being composed just as this new attitude on the part of Christianity toward Judaism on the one hand and toward the Roman empire on the other was developing. Pilate is mentioned only in the gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and First Timothy—documents of about 70 C.E. and thereafter.(9) Paul's general silence regarding Pilate is lamentable. To rediscover the original and genuine Pilate and what actually took place at the trial of Jesus is consequently a formidable critical task. But this unrevised Pilate must be recovered if the historical significance of the trial of Jesus is to be understood.

4. *The Synoptic Gospels and Acts on Pilate*

By arranging the documents of the New Testament concerned with Pilate chronologically, the gradual Christian re-

valuation of his attitude toward Jesus can easily be traced.

According to the gospel of Mark, Pilate condemns Jesus although reluctantly:

> 'Jesus he handed over to be crucified, after he had scourged him . . . Then they [the Roman soldiers] crucified him.'(10)

According to the gospel of Matthew, Pilate is much more sympathetic, refusing repeatedly to condemn Jesus and symbolizing his confidence in the innocence of Jesus by washing his hands. The Jews are also represented as taking the blood of Jesus upon themselves and their children and Pilate's wife as having a warning against condemnation of the Nazarene in a dream. Nevertheless it is Pilate who scourges Jesus and hands him over to his soldiers for crucifixion.(11)

According to the gospel of Luke, Pilate not only thrice declares Jesus innocent but sends him to Herod who likewise pronounces the indicted innocent. Three times Pilate seeks to rescue Jesus from death. Indeed, the Roman governor planned to release Jesus with a whipping. The scourging was inflicted as an offset to crucifixion. But all this was in vain. Yet it is still Pilate who hands Jesus over to their will. The actual executioners of Jesus have now become the anonymous 'they'. Only once in the thirty-one verses devoted to the description of the crucifixion and burial of Jesus in this gospel is the word 'soldiers' to be found. And then only after the crucifixion has occurred: '*The soldiers made fun of him too* by coming up and handing him vinegar . . .' This is exceedingly ominous.(12)

In the Acts of the Apostles, the guilt of Pilate tends to fade away as the total guilt for the 'murder of Jesus' is transferred to Israel.

> 'You delivered up and repudiated (Jesus) before Pilate. Pilate had decided to release him, but you repudiated the Holy and Just One; the boon you asked was a murderer, and you killed the pioneer of Life.'
> 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem and their rulers by condemning him in their ignorance fulfilled the words of the prophets which are read every sabbath; though they could find him guilty of no crime that deserved death they begged Pilate to have him put to death, and, after carrying out all that had been predicted of him in the scripture, they lowered him from the gibbet and laid him in a tomb.'(13)

The new Christian theology emerges here according to which the death of Jesus was decreed by God from all eternity, was necessary for the salvation of the world, and yet the executors of the divine plan of redemption could be declared guilty of murder.

5. *Pilate as Attorney for Jesus*

According to the gospel of John, Pilate is both a defender and a mocker of the Nazarene. The accusers of Jesus have a bad conscience and only slight faith in the validity of the counts in their indictment against him. They halt and hesitate.

> 'What charge do you bring against this man?'
> 'If he had not been a criminal, we would not have handed him over to you.'

No Roman court will condemn a person against whom no specific indictment has been formulated. Hence, Jesus is

charged with claiming to be king of the Jews. Thereupon he is accused of 'making himself out to be God's Son'. Finally, the procurator is reminded that an official who supports a rebel against the majesty of the empire cannot be considered a friend of Caesar.

The governor is portrayed as carefully investigating, as was his duty, the specific charges against Jesus who defends himself successfully. Jesus is a king, but his realm is not of this world. The kingdom he is advocating would never be in competition with the empire of Tiberius. The claim of divine sonship does not constitute a capital crime. Jesus boldly declares that both Pilate and Judas (or the Jewish leaders?) will be guilty of his death. Pilate again and again affirms the innocence of Jesus. But the Jews insist upon crucifixion. Pilate mocks Jesus by placing him upon the judgment seat but in the end, having done everything possible as attorney for Jesus, surrenders to the demand for his execution.

At this point, the Gospel of John becomes indefinite:

> 'Then Pilate handed him over to them to be crucified.
>
> 'So they took Jesus, and he went away, carrying the cross by himself, to the spot called the "place of the skull"—the Hebrew name is Golgotha; there they crucified him along with two others.'

The blame for the crucifixion itself seems to be passing from the soldiers who did it to the Jews who had not. But John 19:23 states without equivocation, '*Now when the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes and divided them into four parts, one for each soldier.*'

Disagreements in the New Testament descriptions of the passion of Jesus appear elsewhere. For example, Mark lets

the arrest of Jesus be made by a 'mob with swords and cudgels who had come from the high-priests and scribes and elders'; Matthew, by a 'large mob with swords and cudgels who had come from the high priests and the elders of the people'; Luke, by a mob but the high-priests and other Jewish leaders are present in person, 'then he said to the high priests and commanders of the temple and elders who had appeared to take him'; John, by troops and attendants belonging to the high priests, 'So the troops and their commander and the Jewish attendants seized Jesus.'(14)

6. Per *Becomes* Sub

Within a century after the death of Jesus the tendency emerging in the gospels and the Acts of the Apostles of exonerating Pilate from blame in the execution of Jesus had attained such proportions that Justin the Martyr could completely reverse the historical statement of Tacitus. Tacitus had said:

> 'Christus, the founder of that [Christian] name, was put to death as a criminal *by* [*per*] Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judea, in the reign of Tiberius.' (15)

According to Tacitus, Pontius Pilate was the active agent of his imperial master in effecting the death of Jesus. The apologist Justin, however, changed '*by*' to '*under*' and thus transferred the guilt of Pilate to the Jewish people:

> 'This very Son of God . . . was crucified *under* Pontius Pilate *by* your nation.'(16)

This was tragic, for later Christian dogmatists would quote Justin rather than the gospels. Justin the Martyr had spoken, the case was settled. And how!

For Justin was so well-informed! Why he had read the *Acts of Pontius Pilate* in which details of the trial and execu-

tion of Jesus were to be found.(17) Naturally, Pilate as an official of the imperial government 'must have' sent an elaborate report of the crucifixion to the reigning Caesar! But numerous modern scholars regard Justin's *Acts of Pilate* as pure fiction.

Justin had not a little to do with preparing the medieval Christian verdict upon Israel. He could open the Old Testament at almost any page and discover some reference to the career of Jesus. By resorting to the allegorical method of interpreting the Bible, rain can be transformed into T.N.T. and birds into heretics, Sarah into wisdom and the Jordan into base, the river Gihon into recognition of woman's rights and Adam into a dam. But such caprice soon commits suicide. The exegesis of Justin is so vulnerable that the historical method of interpreting the Bible has set much of it aside. But the medieval age applauded Justin for pointing out that the innocent first and second psalms foretold 'the conspiracy which was formed against Christ by Herod, the king of the Jews, and the Jews themselves, and Pilate, who was your governor among them with his soldiers.'(18)

Crucifixion was a Roman penalty, but Justin fastened the crucifixion upon Judaism. Moreover, the expanding 'Apostles' Creed' advertised that slander.

'Who *under* Pontius Pilate was crucified.'

Thus by a magic change from *per* to *sub*, agency metamorphoses into time when.

CHAPTER IV

The Pilates as Christians

The centurion present at the crucifixion of Jesus became a bishop of Cappadocia! The soldiers who executed Paul affiliated with the Christian church![1] Similarly Pontius Pilate was transfigured and became a Christian! Villains are only understudies of heroes. Critics of the faith become its apologists.

1. *Pilate and Wife Accept Christianity*

While Pilate 'was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that righteous man; for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.' Thus the gospel of Matthew.[2] In the first Greek form of *The Acts of Pilate*, the Roman governor is represented as summoning the Jews and remarking to them: 'You know that my wife is a worshipper of God, and prefers to adhere to the Jewish religion along with you.'[3] Christian propaganda soon identified the Claudia who saluted Timothy with Procla the wife of Pilate.[4]

Naturally Procla would finally win over her husband to complete acceptance of Christianity. Less than two centuries after Pilate brutally executed Jesus, the followers of Jesus proclaim from the roof-tops that Pilate turned Christian. Without giving a single reason for his change of heart, Pilate is introduced as a Christian by that foremost champion of more than orthodox Christianity, Tertullian.

> 'And now in fact a Christian in his own convictions, Pilate sent word of Him to the reigning Caesar, who was at the time Tiberius. Yes, and the Caesars too would have believed on Christ, if either the Caesars had not been necessary for the world, or if Christians could have been Caesars.'(5)

Origen improves upon the guess of Tertullian by stating that 'Pilate confessed that Jesus was the Christ.'(6)

And later Christianity in claiming everything and everyone in sight even interpolated the writings of Josephus the Jew to make him recognize the messianity of Jesus:

> 'Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to himself both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was the Christ.'(7)

2. *Pilate the Pious*

Occasionally the navy turns literary. It was the presence of an English marine officer in Abyssinia in the late nineteenth century that made a potent prayer of Pilate available to the modern world. In 1897 there was published an Ethiopic manuscript containing a prayer by Pilate to Jesus. It was uttered at the sealed tomb of Jesus in which Pilate had substituted a dead body for the vanished body of Jesus:

> 'I believe that thou art risen and hast appeared unto me. But do not judge me, for I did this unto thee on account of fear of the Jews. In no way do I deny thy resurrection, O my Lord. I believe upon thy word and thy miracles which thou didst perform

> among them. When thou wast living thou didst raise many dead . . . '

Pilate had prayed effectually, for the dead forthwith spoke and arose:

> 'And after Pilate had uttered this prayer, there came a voice out of the mouth of the dead, saying: "O Lord, open the gate of thy grave as thou didst once open the door of the tomb. Remove the stone, O my Lord Pilate, that I may go forth in the power of my Lord Jesus Christ who has risen from the dead".'(8)

3. *Pilate Fashions Image of Jesus*

Second century Christianity sending its roots down into the soil of Graeco-Roman culture absorbed much pre-Christian Oriental mysticism usually called Gnosticism. This ancient theosophy rejoiced to meet Christianity and amalgamate with it. One of the resulting Gnostic-Christian species is known as Carpocratianism. The followers of Carpocrates believed many things. This naughty world was created by third-rate angels. Any superior soul can afford to despise the inferior mechanics who hammered out this evil world. They practiced magical arts and incantations, philters and love-potions. They were in contact with dream-sending demons. Things are evil or good simply because of human opinion. Souls should have experience of every kind of life and hence migrate from body to body. Since sin is necessary it cannot be evil. They branded their disciples inside the lobe of the right ear.

The Carpocratians promoted the worship of images by Christians. They owned painted images of Pythagoras and

Plato and Aristotle and other Greeks. But the principal exhibit among all their idols painted or formed of different kinds of material was a likeness of Christ fashioned by Pilate at the time when Jesus lived among men.(9)

4. *Pilate Not Responsible for Jesus' Death*

Late in the nineteenth century an Egyptian tomb yielded a fragment of a second century gospel known as the *Gospel of Peter*. It contains the story of the passion of Jesus from the trial before the Roman procurator to the resurrection. This gospel was used by Jewish Christians living in Syria during the fifth century and as late as the eleventh century was still highly regarded among other Christians. This description of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus not only absolves Pilate from all guilt but lets him accept the deity of Jesus.

Herod sentenced Jesus to death. Herod has almost complete jurisdiction since Pilate must ask him for the body of Jesus. Herod's soldiers actually crucified Jesus. Innocent Pilate alone washes his hands. Pious Pilate believes that Jesus is Son of God. That this mutilation of history could be accomplished within a brief century after the establishment of the Christian church is a sad commentary upon the ancient Christian attitude toward facts and truth. The pertinent sentences of the fragment are quoted:

> '. . . But not one of the Jews washed his hands (as Pilate had). Herod did not. Not one of his judges did. But when they refused to wash themselves, Pilate arose. *King Herod ordered the Lord to be seized*, as he said to them: "Everything that I have ordered you to do to him do"...Pilate sent to Herod and asked him for the body of the Lord . . . When the centurion and his associates beheld what happen-

> ed [referring to the opening of the heavens and the descent of one who entered the tomb], they hastened during the night to Pilate, abandoning the grave where they were guarding, and reported in great fear, what they had seen, and said: "In truth he was Son of God". Pilate answered and said: "*I am innocent of the blood of the Son of God! You determined upon this*".' (10)

5. *Reconstructing the Trial Scene*

Medieval Christians loved and devoutly believed in their *Gospel of Nicodemus*. Twentieth century fundamentalists also do. This so-called gospel purports to be an account of the trial of Jesus, the action of the Sanhedrin, and Christ's descent into Hades. It is a rather interesting accumulation of Christian fiction. The source of all existing texts originated in the fifth century just in time to become authentic and apostolic for the aesthetic Christian era. The lacunae in the canonical gospels left plenty of room for expansion of history. *The Acts of Pilate* are extant in one Latin and two Greek versions; the *Descent of Christ to Hades* in one Greek and two Latin versions. The grotesque and bizarre are interwoven with occasionaly reliable data. Nicodemus who came to Jesus by night was made the author of this forgery.

At the time of the trial, Jesus is accused of being a magician, casting out demons through Beelzebul their prince. But Pilate refuses to be fooled; he knows better. Jesus casts out demons by invoking the aid of the great god Aesculapius. Pilate is very modest and humble. An ordinary procurator cannot possibly hear charges preferred against a King! Class distinctions must always be maintained. Jesus is respectfully led to the seat of judgment. The runner who sum-

mons Jesus to trial first of all adores him, spreading his garment upon the ground that the accused Nazarene may approach the Roman governor as king. 'My Lord, come in; the procurator calleth Thee.'

As Jesus passes the standard-bearers holding their ensigns aloft, the latter bend down of their own accord and adore Jesus. The standard-bearers assure Pilate that they did not do it. A miracle has occurred. Twelve powerful and strong men are now ordered to hold up the standards and prevent them from tipping. And yet Pilate threatens a general decapitation if the standards fail to adore Jesus.

When the trial at last, after many interruptions, gets under way, the entire life of Jesus is surveyed from his birth in Bethlehem and flight into Egypt until the triumphal entry and arrest. *The strange thing is that in these fifth century* Acts of Pilate *there is no reference to a birth from a virgin*. Twelve witnesses affirm the marriage of Joseph to Mary. Nicodemus appears at the trial and defends Jesus, pointing out that 'if the miracles which he does are of God, they will stand; but if of man, they will come to nothing.' The man who lay in bed thirty-eight years in great agony, also testifies. Thereupon various other persons cured by Jesus plead for his release. Ignorant Pontius Pilate himself offers a post-graduate course in Hebrew history to the assembled doctors of philosophy of Judaism! One might hope that after all this use of the Christian imagination, the dénouement could have been different. But at the end of this peculiar trial, Pilate

> 'orders the curtain of the tribunal where he was sitting to be drawn, and says to Jesus: "Thy nation has charged thee with being a King. On this account I sentence Thee, first to be scourged, according to the enactment of venerable kings, and then

to be fastened on the cross *in the garden where thou wast seized.* And let Dysmus and Gestas, the two malefactors, be crucified with Thee''.'(11)

6. *Pilate Confers with Annas and Caiaphas*

Pilate, the Christian, cannot be contented with his achievements as apologist for Jesus until he demonstrates from the Old Testament that the death of Jesus had been predicted by the prophets of Israel. The Bible of Judaism proves the messiahship of Jesus! But other Christians had also done this. The special merit of Pilate was that he compelled both Annas and Caiaphas to vindicate the messianity of Jesus. If the high priests of the Jews were aware of the fact that Jesus had fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies and was therefore the Messiah, why should the case be longer debated?

And this is how Pontius Pilate proved his point. He walked over to the temple in Jerusalem one day and summoned all the chief priests and learned men and scribes and teachers of the law for a conference. They withdrew into the sanctuary of the temple, and the doors were bolted. Then Pilate remarked, 'I understand that you Jews have a great library of holy books. I desire to see them.' Four stalwarts brought in the books adorned with gold and precious gems. Pilate now adjured the leaders of the Jews to tell him truly and without equivocation whether these scriptures state that Jesus who was crucified is the Son of God. Annas and Caiaphas have the sanctuary of the temple cleared of all others except Pilate. The trio has a very secret conclave. Annas and Caiaphas report how, after the death of Jesus, they became convinced of the genuineness of the Nazarene's miracles. But a miracle is an act of God. It must always be acknowledged, and their holy book must therefore contain

some evidence of the divinity of Jesus. As they searched its pages they found

> 'in the first book of the Septuaginta, where the archangel Michael spoke to the third son of Adam of 5,500 years in which the Christ was to come from the heavens.'

Annas and Caiaphas also recalled that in Exodus 25:10, God had said that the ark of the covenant should be 'two and one-half cubits in length, one and one-half cubits in breadth, and one and one-half cubits in height.' But 2½ + 1½ + 1½ = 5½. Therefore, from the structure of the ark of the old covenant, it is clear for the second time that Jesus the Christ was to come in the ark of the body 5,500 years after Adam.

Now from	years
Creation of the world and Adam to the deluge	= 2212
Deluge to the building of the tower	= 531
Tower to Abraham	= 606
Abraham to Exodus	= 470
Exodus to Solomon's temple	= 511
Solomon's temple to its destruction	= 464
From Nebuchadrezzar to advent	= 636
Therefore from Adam to the Messiah	=5,430!

Now by changing 2212 into 2262 and 606 into 676 and 636 into 586, we may obtain the necessary 5500 years from Adam to the Messiah. There is still a slight discrepancy since 'biblical' calculations of the date of the creation of Adam vary from 3500 to 6984 B.C. The exodus occurred 2,666 or 1,852, or 3,917 years after creation, according as

the Hebrew Old Testament, the Samaritan Pentateuch, or the Greek translation of the Old Testament is consulted. No exact chronology is derivable from the Bible. Moreover, Seth was not born until 130 years after the creation of Adam. It may be interesting to some to know that chapters twenty-one and thirty-eight of *The Conflict of Adam and Eve with Satan* contain references to a covenant of 5,500 years.

Annas and Caiaphas made their marvellous deductions a strictly sub rosa affair!

> 'Even until now we have told no one, that there might be no dissension in our synagogue. And now, thou hast adjured us, O good judge, by this holy book of the testimonies of God, and we make it manifest to thee.
> '*And now we adjure thee, by thy life and safety, to make manifest these words to no one in Jerusalem.*'(12)

7. *Pilate Reports to Tiberius*

Pilate not only compelled the Jewish leaders to acknowledge under oath that Jesus was the predicted Messiah, he wrote letters to both Tiberius and Claudius about these events in Palestine! The Christian hagiographer sometimes even forgets the succession of the Roman emperors!

In these letters, Pilate's memory requires a considerable degree of 'refreshing'. For he tells Claudius, demoted from emperor of the realm to king of the city of Rome, that 'all the people of the Jews said that Jesus was the Son of God' and that the Jews crucified Jesus and that the soldiers on guard at the tomb both pocketed the hush money and witnessed to Christ's resurrection from the dead.

It is in his correspondence with Tiberius Caesar, the emperor, that Pilate demonstrates himself to be a good Chris-

tian theologian of a later time. The pagan procurator knows more about Jesus immediately after the crucifixion than history has ever known. He informs a listening world that Christianity is in existence and growing larger every day when the disciples of Jesus hiding in fear and disappointment in Galilee have not as yet dared to organize. Pilate also would pass A plus on detailed knowledge of the Old Testament.

> 'Upon Jesus Christ, whose case I had clearly set forth to thee in my last, at length, by the will of the people a bitter punishment has been inflicted, myself being in a sort unwilling and afraid. A man, by Hercules, so pious and strict, no age had ever had nor will have. But wonderful were the efforts of the people themselves, and the unanimity of all the scribes and chief men and elders, to crucify this ambassador of truth, notwithstanding that their own prophets, and after our manner the sibyls, warned them against it: and supernatural signs appeared while he was hanging, and, in the opinion of philosophers, threatened destruction of the whole world. His disciples are flourishing, in their work and the regulation of their lives not belying their master; yea, in his name most beneficial . . . I did not according to my strength resist to free innocent blood from the whole charge brought against it, but unjustly, through the malignity of men, permitted it to be sold and to suffer, yet as the Scriptures signify, to their own destruction. Farewell. 28th March.'(13)

8. *Nero Consults Pilate's Letter*

It is embarrassing and humiliating for the modern Christian to become familiar with the prevarications of his more remote ancestors in regard to the disciples of Jesus and Pontius Pilate and Israel. It is difficult to select from among the luxuriant legends any particular one that might be regarded as the softest of the lot. But for rich humor, one might be pardoned for favoring the trial of Simon the Magian and the apostles Peter and Paul before the emperor Nero. For in this trial the letter of Pilate to Claudius is suddenly appealed to by Peter as evidence! *The Acts of the Holy Apostles Peter and Paul* should be perused by all those in doubt about the ethical evolution of Christianity.

Simon the Magian has accused the apostles Peter and Paul before the emperor Nero of disputing the claim that Simon is the 'Son of God come down from heaven'. Nero reminds Simon that God wishes all men to be brothers! Thereupon Nero asks Peter why he belongs to an unbelieving race. Peter says nothing to Nero but accuses Simon of practicing magical arts and of identifying himself with Christ. The use of the word 'Christ' makes it necessary to consult the writings of Pontius Pilate sent to the emperor Claudius. Nero reads that correspondence in court and then inquires whether Pilate wrote the truth. Peter swears that he did. Thus Nero learns that Pilate knew about C.E. 30 that Jesus was born 'by means of a virgin'. Pilate knew about the birth from a virgin long before the Christian church was given the information.

But Peter goes on to declare that Simon is full of lies and deceit. Simon replies in kind. Nero becomes puzzled. Peter challenges Simon to tell as 'Son of God' what Peter is think-

ing and has secretly done. Simon full of wrath cries, 'Let great dogs come forth and eat him up before Caesar'. Great dogs appeared and rushed at Peter who showed them the loaf he had blessed and they vanished.

Nero concludes that Simon has got the worst of it but wonders why Paul has nothing to say. Paul observes that the Roman empire will disintegrate if Simon is permitted to practice his magical arts.

Simon decides to demonstrate that he is a god. A lofty tower of wood is erected in the Campus Martius. Simon ascends crowned with laurels. As Nero and the apostles and all the people gaze upon him, Simon stretches forth his hands and begins to fly toward heaven. Nero now calls Peter and Paul deceivers. But Peter, looking steadfastly against Simon, said:

> 'I adjure, ye angels of Satan, who are carrying him into the air, to deceive the hearts of the unbelievers, by the God that created all things and by Jesus Christ, whom on the third day He raised from the dead, no longer from this hour to keep him up, but to let him drop.'

They pick up four pieces of Simon. But Nero puts Paul and Peter in irons, for Simon will rise on the third day. When Peter tells Nero that he has condemned Simon to everlasting punishment, humane Nero orders Paul beheaded and Peter crucified. A mob gathers reviling Caesar and wishing to kill him but it is calmed by Peter who meets death upon a reversed cross.

And thus a letter never penned by Pontius Pilate can be sent to the imperial archives and read by the emperor Nero at an alleged contest for supremacy between Simon the

Magian and the apostles Peter and Paul. But the underlying motive of the letter is to justify the Christian treatment of the Jews:

> 'For the Jews through envy have inflicted upon themselves, and those coming after them, dreadful judgments.'

The Christian attitude and actions against the Jews are in accordance with the plan of God. Let no Christian fear to do his duty. Consequently, no opportunity is overlooked to turn a situation against the Jews. For instance, in the *Doctrine of Addai*, it is related that Judas Thomas sent Addai, one of the seventy-two disciples of Jesus, to Abgar, king of Edessa. In addition to healing the king of his sickness, Addai mentions the recovery of the true cross by Protonice, wife of the emperor Claudius. Edessa is evangelized. And thereupon king Abgar induces the emperor Tiberius, already dead, to chastise the Jews for having crucified the Savior!(14)

9. *Pilate's Judgment*

The sacrifice of Isaac never performed by Abraham became, through the Christian custom of associating events in the history of Israel with those in the history of Christianity, the true Israel, a prototype of the lamb of God. In the catacombs the subject most frequently chosen from the passion of Jesus is Pilate's judgment and this contrasting relief. Thus Pilate could be exalted as playing a very necessary part in the scheme of redemption.(15)

CHAPTER V

The Pilates as Saints

Dante consigned Annas and Caiaphas to the inferno:

This transfixed one, whom thou seest,
Counselled the Pharisees that it was meet
To put one man to torture for the people.
Crosswise and naked is he on the path,
As thou perceivest; and he needs must feel,
Whoever passes, first how much he weighs;
And in like mode his father-in-law is punished
Within this moat and the others of the council,
Which for the Jews was a malignant seed.

The famous Italian located Philip the Fair, the modern Pilate, in purgatory:

I see the modern Pilate, so relentless,
This doth not sate him, but without decretal
He to the temple bears his sordid sails.(1)

The ancient and original Pontius Pilate escaped both the inferno and purgatory of Dante because that poet believed the procurator's verdict not only legal but also essential to the salvation of man. But Dante was too familiar with history to turn Pontius Pilate into a Christian, much less into a Christian saint.

This metamorphosis of the brutal Roman official who scourged Jesus of Nazareth, tantalized him, and finally sentenced him to the torture of the cross for sedition may surprise the modern Christian and could hardly have been pro-

posed by the ancient Christian. For the medieval Christian, it was only a slight achievement. Medieval Christianity was not ordinarily halted by the hedge of fact. It could take the highest hurdles of truth with scarcely a fall.

1. *Saints and Saints*

There are saints and saints. Saint Francis still judges the modern Christian, summoning him to follow in his train of devotion to high ideals. On the other hand, Saint Nicholas is the patron saint not only of virgins and children but of robbers and an assortment of other suspicious characters. Too many discrepant things are associated with his memory, such as the mysterious Christmas stocking and the three golden balls that adorn the pawnbroker's shop. Saint Valentine is such a faded specimen yet ultimately traceable to the wolf-goat festival of atonement and fertility anciently celebrated in a cave on the Palatine hill. Even expressions of adoration like *Kyrie, eleison* were personalized into saints by the medieval church. Buddha was christened Saint Josaphat. One of the most powerful saints in Syria today is Saint George, a reconstructed Tammuz. A shrine of Cybele, the Phrygian mother goddess, once stood near the site of the great church of Saint Peter. The Greek goddess Demeter not only became Saint Demetra but by a change of sex also Saint Demetrius. Scratch Saint Bride, or Saint Bridget, to come upon an old heathen goddess of fertility. The festival of Saint George in April was formerly the pagan festival of the Parilia and that of Saint John the Baptist in June, an ancient pagan midsummer festival of water. A festival in honor of Diana lingers on in Christianity in the Assumption of the Virgin. All Souls in November continues an ancient pagan feast of the dead.(2)

To personalization of names, assimilation of earlier pagan characteristics, changes in sex by Christian saints, add their relics, and the metamorphosis of the pagan procurator Pontius Pilate into a Christian saint loses color.

Even stern John Calvin of Geneva faintly smiles when he reviews the superstitions of his day—the 'shoes' of Christ, the bread which fed the 5,000, a piece of the broiled fish undecomposed after 1500 years although frigidaires were not yet invented, six napkins of Veronica, speaking crucifixes, 'shoes' of Saint Joseph which could have been fitted only to a Chinese woman's mutilated foot, the dagger of the archangel Michael, Saint Anne with her two bodies, three hands and arms! (3)

Saint Denys has seven extant equally genuine heads. In Corbie, there was many centuries ago a portion of the beard of Noah. The collection of relics at Halle in the time of Luther contained two of the jars used at the marriage in Cana, earth upon which the Lord's Prayer was first recited, earth from Damascus out of which Adam was fashioned, earth from Hebron where Adam repented, a piece of the body of Isaac, twenty-five pieces of the burning bush, remnants of desert manna, the finger of John the Baptist with which he pointed to Jesus, the finger which Thomas laid in the side of Jesus, a piece of the altar on which John read the mass to Mary, the stone which killed Stephen, a piece of the staff of Peter, a part of the skull of Paul, and the pants of Thomas of Canterbury. The total came to 8,933 fragments and 42 complete bodies accompanied by an indulgence of 39,245,120 years and 220 days.

For some it must have been less difficult to worship Pontius Pilate as saint than to believe that the boards of the crib of Jesus were in the basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore.

Frederick the Wise, the Elector of Saxony and supporter of the cause of Luther, had among his 5,005 carefully selected relics some soot from the bodies of the three men in the fiery furnace. And the steps under which poor Lazarus lay with all his sores never anticipated immortality among the relics of Frederick at Wittenberg.

The median cost of advancement to sainthood in the medieval period is not known. It was probably less than at present. The total expenses for the elevation of Saints Anthony Zuccaria and Peter Fourier, very recently, amounted to Lire 221,849.10, or $42,816.87.(4) At this rate the Ethiopic Church would have gone into bankruptcy by the seventh century.

Only a life marked by heroic virtue may be listed for canonization. Proof of sanctity of one proposed for sainthood must be furnished.

2. *The Paradosis of Pilate*

Proof of sanctity for Pontius Pilate was furnished by a voice from heaven. The name of the Caesar whose action provided the occasion has faded into anonymity. Before this unknown emperor seated in the temple of the gods, attended by all the senate and all the army, Pilate stands pleading that he is innocent of any intended injustice to Jesus. Herod, Archelaus, Philip, Annas, Caiaphas, and the Jewish multitude—they are the guilty ones. When Caesar named the name of Christ, all the Roman gods fell down in a body and became as dust. Caesar had to adjourn the hearing. Next day in the Capitol, he decides to have all the Jewish nation arrested and sold as slaves. This accomplished, the raging Caesar orders the decapitation of Pontius Pilate for letting

the god Jesus be crucified. The ex-procurator withdraws and prays mightily in silence:

> 'Lord, do not destroy me . . . Thou knowest I did it in ignorance. Do not, then, destroy me for this my sin; remember not evil against me, O Lord, and against Thy servant, *Procla, who is standing with me in this the hour of my death, whom Thou didst appoint to prophesy that Thou shouldest be nailed to the cross.* Do not condemn her also in my sin, but pardon us, and make us to be numbered in the portion of the righteous.'

And now the exalted crucified one himself, the Lord, witnesses from heaven that Pilate will forever and forever be numbered among the blessed:

> 'And, behold, when Pilate had finished his prayer, there came a voice from heaven saying: "All the generations and families of the nations *shall count thee blessed, because under thee have been fulfilled all those things said about me by the prophets; and thou thyself shalt be seen as my witness at my second appearing, when I shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel, and those that have not owned my name*".'

The prefect advanced and struck off the head of Pontius Pilate. But an angel of the Lord descended and took it.

As husband so wife:

> 'And his wife Procla, seeing the angel coming and receiving Pilate's head, being filled with joy herself also, immediately gave up the ghost, and was buried along with her husband, by the will and good pleasure of our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom

be the glory of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, now and ever, and to ages of ages. Amen.'(5)

The particular day for the veneration of the blessed Pontius Pilate was a matter of somewhat later determination. The Coptic Christian church magnified Pilate as a believer in Christ until he became a martyr to Christianity. The Ethiopic Christian Church conferred saintship upon both Pilate and his wife.

3. *The Ethiopian Christian Church*

Three distinct races, African aborigines, Hamites, and Semites, were blended to form the population of Abyssinia. Today paganism, Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Christianity exist there side by side. Paganism persists among the negroes and Hamites. Remnants of Judaism also appear among the Hamites. All of the races are affiliated with both Mohammedanism and Christianity. The principal representatives of Christianity are Semites. Among the ordinary people, religious differences are discernible only through external forms and customs. In Northern Abyssinia, Muslims occasionally join Christians for the Easter baptism, while Christians sometimes call upon Allah and Mohammed his prophet.(6)

The Christian tradition lets Philip the evangelist meet a man from Ethiopia on the road connecting Jerusalem and Gaza. This gentleman was 'a eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was over all her treasure, who had come to Jerusalem to worship and was now returning and sitting in his chariot'. The two strangers conversed about the tenets of the new cult. They came to some water, and the eunuch proposed baptism for himself.

Upon his return to Abyssinia he presumably evangelized the nation.(7)

But Jewish missionaries first propagated their faith in Abyssinia. As far as Christianity is concerned, it took root there in the fourth century rather than in the first when three Christians from Tyre trading on the Red Sea were attacked by Abyssinians who captured two of them, Frumentius and Aedesius, and presented them to the king in his capital at Aksum. These Christians rose rapidly to places of influence and power in the realm, meanwhile preaching the gospel of Jesus. Frumentius was consecrated bishop of the Ethiopians by the exceedingly orthodox Athanasius, the father of the Nicene Creed.

Abyssinia already possessed a luxuriant growth of superstition, awaiting syncretism with Christianity. This did not prevent migrating Egyptian monks from importing a thousand and one bits of Egyptian folklore. This union of the legends of Ethiopia and Egypt soon promoted the Ethiopic church to the head of the Christian procession as a both-and repository of mythology.

The liturgy of the Ethiopic Christian church made room for many otherwise unknown saints including 'the strong and holy abba Moses, the black'. Ethiopic Christianity practiced the salutation of one another with the holy kiss. It celebrated the nativity each month throughout the year. It granted an emperor immortality. It made Eusebius a resident of heaven for seven years. It turned Aaron into a magician who cured himself when sick by causing well roasted pigeons to fly into his expectant mouth. It believed that Batalza had become light as air through continual fasting. It prescribed an annual immersion for the entire nation. It practiced circumcision and recognized distinctions between

clean and unclean foods. It did not object to polygamous relationships. It approved dancing in the temple. It kept both the Jewish Sabbath and the Christian Sunday. It had an ark of Zion, the very heart of its cult, to which it offered gifts and prayers. Native Ethiopic literature consists of chronicles, magic formulae, and legends of the saints.

The Ethiopic canon of the scriptures contains not merely the sixty-six books of the Protestant Bible and the extra half-dozen books of the Roman Catholic Bible but also for good measure Enoch, the Book of Jubilees, I and II Clement, and an appendix. Enoch it locates in the Old Testament and Clement in the New Testament. The so-called Apocrypha, the Book of Jubilees, Esther, Ecclesiastes, Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs, the major and minor prophets, it reserves for catechumens. One book is listed twice as Ecclesiasticus and as Jesus Son of Sirach. Its ecclesiastical literature was a translation at first from the Greek and later from the Arabic.

The Ethiopic church argued itself into disintegration over a definition of the nature of Christ.

This debate on the nature of Christ in the Christian church covered a period of at least seven centuries in its earlier phases. One of its halting points was the adoption of the compromise formula of Chalcedon, consisting of a single very long Greek sentence:

> 'We, then, following the holy Fathers all with one consent, teach men to confess one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, the same perfect in Godhead and also perfect in manhood; truly God and truly man, *of a reasonable (rationable) soul* and body; consubstantial (coessential) with the father according to the Godhead, and consubstantial

with us according to the manhood; in all things like unto us without sin; begotten before all ages of the Father according to the Godhead, and in these latter days, for us and for our salvation, born of the Virgin Mary, THE MOTHER OF GOD, ACCORDING TO THE MANHOOD; one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only begotten, to be acknowledged in TWO NATURES, INCONFUSEDLY, UNCHANGEABLY, INDIVISIBLY, INSEPARABLY; the distinction of natures being by no means taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons, but one and the same Son, and only begotten, God the Word, the Lord Jesus Christ; as the prophets from the beginning have declared concerning Him, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself has taught us, and the Creed of the holy Fathers has handed down to us.'(8)

The italicized words were directed against the heresy of Apollinaris; the words in small capitals against that of Nestorius; the words in capitals against that of Eutyches. All of these men thought they were orthodox and helping the cause of pure Christianity. As soon as they explained their faith they became heretics.

After the adoption of the formula of Chalcedon, the bitter discussion continued, resulting finally in the separation of the provincial churches from the main line of Christianity. By the sixth century Ethiopia had embraced the heresy known as monophysitism.

4. *Ethiopia Saints the Pilates*

Various saints are remembered in the calendars of Christianity on June 25; Saint William, abbot of Monte Vergine, confessor, for example; or Febronias, holy martyr; or Saint Prosper of Aquitain; or Saint Maximus, bishop of Turin.(9)

All of these saints are pygmies over against the selection of the Ethiopic Christian church. Ethiopia venerates on June 25, 'Pilate and Procla his wife'. Why? The calendar merely quotes as reason the verse from the gospel of Matthew, 'Pilate washed his hands and said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just man".'(10) Formerly the Greek Catholic Church remembered Procla as saint.(11)

PART TWO

CHRISTIANITY'S BOOK OF SHAME

CHAPTER VI: *Christianity's Debt to Judaism*

AMONG THE elements of strength credited to Judaism in comparative studies of the religions of the world are monotheism, moral government of the world, sin as violation of the law of God, the brotherhood of man, communion with God, obedience to the law of God, spiritual worship, the high destiny of man, humanitarianism, purity of domestic life, religious education, the power to be patient and to endure, the hope of a better future, and a unique religious literature.(1)

Christianity was born within Judaism. Its early writings are saturated with references to the holy volume of Judaism. The arguments of the New Testament compositions can not be understood without the background of the Old Testament. Its documents are quoted as final authority by the authors of the New Testament. A New Testament problem is settled when its solution agrees with the Old Testament.

The terminology of early Christianity and its approach to religion are Jewish. It is interested in monotheism, the kingdom of God, the Messiah, the judgment of the world, the Son of Man, Abraham, David, the passover, tabernacles,

the rabbis, the scribes, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the high-priest, the temple at Jerusalem, not in Zeus, Isis, Mithras, Athens, Rome. The horizon of primitive Christianity is Jewish nationalism. Occasionally even Aramaic words like *Beelzebul*, *talitha koum*, *Barabbas*, *eloi*, *eloi*, *lema sabacthanei* are found. The geography of the gospels is Palestine. Renan in his *Life of Jesus* refers to Palestine as a fifth gospel.(2)

What, then, is Christianity's debt to Judaism? What did the daughter-religion inherit from the mother-religion?

1. *Jesus*

The principal bequest of Judaism to Christianity was Jesus of Nazareth. However much later Christianity may have departed from his ideals and reconstructed his gospel, the personality of Jesus started the Christian community.

Regarding the Jewishness of Jesus there can be no dispute. All attempts to establish the non-Jewish descent of Jesus end in failure. Jesus was aware of his Jewish origin. He participated in synagogue worship and temple ritual alike. The instruction in the synagogue and the home acquainted him with the scriptures of his people. He defended the sacredness of the Temple and the permanent validity of the Law. His mission was to his people not to the Gentile world. He selected disciples who were pious and observant Jews and confined their mission to the Jews. The Syro-Phoenician woman was startled by Jesus' abrupt refusal to help her. It is only in the latest strata of the gospels that Greeks desire to see Jesus, magi come from the East to visit and worship the babe Jesus, a star announces his birth to the entire world, angels bring tidings of great joy to all people.(3) Third century Christians of Edessa let Jesus correspond with an ear-

lier king Abgar and cure him. But the Jesus of history was beyond cavil a Jew.(4)

The original gospel portrait of Jesus is of one incandescent with God and yet natural, human, at home in God's world. God was very real for him and to him. He naively believed in God's care of the wild lilies of the field, the birds on the roof-tops and the hairs on his head. Jesus never demanded of others anything which he had not first required of himself. He was genuine. He struggled to maintain his ideal of God and man and the world from the temptation in the wilderness to the death-shriek, 'my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me', upon the cross. He did not announce a program. He pursued an ideal. Christianity has survived the crises of its history because it possessed principles which could be applied in a new way rather than a set of regulations unenforceable in the abandoned environment.

Jesus felt that the universe was ultimately friendly. He put love not fear at its heart. That God was to be loved and trusted, forgave freely, cared, and was just was axiomatic with Jesus. He believed that men should be brotherly. Race antagonism and class feeling were not characteristic of him. He reverenced all life. Life for him was mysterious but also simple, heroic, dynamic. The human personality has infinite worth. The value of man cannot be effaced. Man is of greater significance than property or holy institutions. The Sabbath was made for man. Every man must learn to judge of himself what is right. Humanity must learn how to live according to God. He, like the earlier prophets, dreamed of a cooperative commonwealth where justice and love and therefore peace would prevail. He sympathized with the unprivileged. He opposed acquisitiveness and vindictiveness and intellectualism. Goodwill must be practical. Jesus'

ideal of love and justice and solidarity has outlasted the intervening centuries and makes it possible for the most modern man to support Christianity.(5)

Jesus would have been forgotten after Calvary if this power of his personality had not previously conquered the selfishness of his disciples in Galilee. They believed in his survival of death because they had believed in him. The greatest achievement of Jesus was himself. Christianity has been able to survive the denial of its principles by bishop, pope, council and constituency because founded upon the ethical ideal of Jesus. The modern world insists upon discriminating between Jesus and Christianity.(6)

2. *Paul*

Paul was a Jew, and regarding his historicity there can be no debate. The very individual, personal, spontaneous correspondence accredited to him by tradition contains so many peculiar situations, emphases, and attitudes as to make it imperative to assume an altogether original personality. Paul was part of the life he describes. Though tinged with Hellenism, Paul was a Jew, born of Jewish parents, trained as a Jew, for a time a convinced persecutor of the Christians, well acquainted with the Old Testament, employer of the Aramaic language and terminology as well as the Greek, arguing from Jewish premises, in his missionary activity annexing to Christianity the men and women on the verge of joining the Jewish church, raising a collection for the poor of Judea. No primitive Christian doubted that Paul was of Jewish descent.

Paul established Gentile Christian churches throughout the Mediterranean world and held them true to a progressive Christian point of view. Because of his success Gentile

Christians began to outnumber Jewish Christians. Some of his letters were included in the canon of the church. He taught that under a moral government of the world, man was a transgressor, hostile to God, involved in sin and guilt and subject to condemnation. Jesus for Paul was a heavenly, preexistent being, creator and soul of the world, who became incarnate to die for man's sin and on account of the power of sin. Paul believed in two world periods, the present evil order and the coming aeon. The present age had ended in principle with the death and resurrection of Christ. The coming age would finally witness the overthrow of all opposition to the lordship of Jesus and the establishment of the complete sovereignty of God. By reinterpreting the last meal of Jesus in sacramental fashion, Paul started the mass of the medieval church on its way.

Paul's converts did not understand him. The author of II Peter regarded Paul as a beloved brother who wrote 'out of the wisdom vouchsafed to him' but also judged that Paul's letters contained 'some knotty points'. The early Gentile Christians had not undergone Paul's travail of soul and could not follow his arguments.(7)

3. *The Diaspora*

For some time before the birth of Christianity, Judaism had been engaged in a very successful mission to the Gentiles and to kindred Semites. Throughout the countries bordering upon the Mediterranean Sea, upon the shores of the Black Sea, in Mesopotamia and Babylonia, it had been propagating its view of God. The adherents of Judaism during the first century of the Christian era have been estimated at over four millions or the equivalent of something like one-seventh of the population of the Roman empire.

The missionaries of Judaism taught that God was one and only, spiritual, creator of heaven and earth, ruling the earth justly, and about to judge all men. Dumb idols must be abandoned and abolished. All cultic and ceremonial requirements of the law were not required of Gentiles.

Many Greeks were attracted to a religion whose worship of God was without images, whose theology was philosophy, which possessed the 'oldest book in the world' and practiced definite rites, a city religion of high spiritual value and of social and political advantage. The majority of the adherents of Judaism from among the Gentiles remained God-fearing pagans since the full-fledged proselyte was under obligation to observe the entire law.

Thus the Jewish diaspora had tilled the religious soil of the entire Roman empire, had definitely organized earnest religious groups in many of its towns, had helped them engage in worship, had offered them instruction in monotheism, in ethics, in its doctrine of the future, and had prepared manuals of materials selected from the Old Testament for their education in Judaism. In the New Testament, passages, like Romans 3:10-18, combining quotations from various psalms into a solid argument, occur and raise the question of the existence of Jewish missionary manuals and catechisms.(8)

That Palestinian Judaism should have launched an attack upon the Roman empire at the very moment when the Judaism of the diaspora was about ready to reap the harvest maturing after many decades of devoted missionary activity among the Gentiles is one of the major tragedies of missions.

When Christianity entered the Graeco-Roman world, it annexed many of the Gentiles prepared for Judaism by Jewish missionaries. Indeed, without this preliminary work on

the part of the Jewish diaspora, Christianity could not have been successfully planted in the Mediterranean world. Christianity was also protected from Rome through identification with Judaism.

Turn to the description of Paul's missionary journeys in the Acts of the Apostles to appreciate his dependence upon the preliminary work of the Jewish diaspora. 'On reaching Salamis they proclaimed the word of God in the Jewish synagogues; on the sabbath they went into the synagogue [Pisidian Antioch] . . . so Paul stood up and said . . . As Paul and Barnabas went out, the people begged to have all this repeated to them on the following sabbath. After the synagogue broke up, a number of the Jews and the devout proselytes followed them . . . and on the next sabbath nearly all the town gathered to hear the word of God.'

4. *The Old Testament*

'In contrast with the product of Egypt or Babylonia,' says James T. Shotwell in his extraordinary *Introduction to the History of History*, 'the Bible stands out as an epoch-making achievement . . . judged as historical material, the Old Testament stands higher today than when its text was protected by the sanctions of religion . . . Judged in the light of its own time, the literature of the Jews is unique in scope as in power.'

It is related of Ptolemy Philadelphus that he traded 100, 000 captives to secure a copy of the Jewish laws. How the translation of the Old Testament into Greek was made is narrated at length in the *Letter of Aristeas*. The author of this pleasant fiction was altogether right in his surmise, 'And I suppose that the thing will seem incredible to those who will read my narrative in the future.' Yet such a story

could never have been suggested to the imagination of the writer, if the Old Testament of his day had not been held in high honor.(9)

The first Bible of the primitive Christian church was the Jewish holy book, later called the Old Testament. The pages of the New Testament contain hundreds of quotations from this volume. A chapter like Acts 7 consists of almost fifty percent Old Testament material. Nine successive verses from Romans 3 are completely Old Testament.

The writings of the Old Testament were holy for the Christian church from the beginning. Ignatius refers to Christians who refuse to believe it in the gospels unless it is found in the Old Testament. And as the writings of the New Testament were gradually canonized, they were at first subordinated in authority to the Old Testament.

How Christians used the Old Testament for their ends is illustrated in Justin the Martyr's narrative of his conversion in the seventh chapter of the *Dialogue with Trypho:*

> 'There existed, long before this time, certain men more ancient than all those who are esteemed philosophers, both righteous and beloved by God, who spoke by the divine Spirit, and foretold events which would take place, and which are now taking place. They are called prophets. These alone both saw and announced the truth to men, neither reverencing nor fearing any man, not influenced by a desire for glory, but speaking those things alone which they saw and which they heard, being filled with the Holy Spirit . . . they did not use demonstration in their treatises, seeing they were witnesses to the truth above all demonstration, and worthy of belief; and those events which have

> happened, and which are happening, compel you to assent to the utterances made by them, although, indeed, they are entitled to credit on account of the miracles which they performed, since they both glorified the Creator, the God and Father of all things, and proclaimed His Son, the Christ sent by Him.'

The Old Testament was for the early Christian a book filled with predictions applicable to the career of Jesus. The virgin birth and the entire career of Jesus had been there foretold!

Christians were also impressed by the style and vigor of the Old Testament, by its moral code, by its monotheism, by its cosmology, by its devotional sections, and by its institutions.

Early Christianity could not afford to abandon the Old Testament because its own holy book had so frequently quoted from the Jewish Bible, because the principal Christian dogmas were demonstrated by the allegorical interpretation of it, because the New Testament could not be understood without it, because the earliest life of the Christian community had been nourished by it, and because the idea of a new covenant presupposed that of an old covenant. Hence, the 'oldest book in the world' with its mysteries, wisdom, ethics, and devotional and prophetic materials was appropriated by Christianity as its own property. The Old Testament became the bridge to Christianity.

5. *The Apocrypha*

The Old Testament existed in a shorter, Hebrew, and a longer, Greek, form. To the period of the Reformation, the Christian church in general employed the larger Bible, con-

taining, in addition to the thirty-nine books in the Protestant Old Testament, these books, Tobit, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, IV Ezra, I, II Maccabees, Judith, and additions to various other books, still in the Roman Catholic Bible.(10)

These books, often called 'Apocrypha', appear as genuine biblical books in many ancient manuscripts and are quoted by the writers of the New Testament as canonical. Luther separated them from the Old Testament books. The Coverdale Bible, 1535, placed them at the end of the Old Testament. The Westminster Confession of Faith classified them among human writings. The British and Foreign Bible Society refused to print them. The United States Customs Court not so long ago decided that the Apocrypha belonged to the Bible only when a part of the Douai Bible.

Passages from the Apocrypha have been very useful as proof-texts for church dogmas. II Maccabees 7:30ff demonstrates the expiatory value of martyrdom; 12:43-45, the efficacy of prayers for the dead; 15:11-16, the intercession of the saints; 7:11,29 and 14:46, the resurrection of the dead. One of the most beautiful descriptions of immortality occurs in Wisdom 2:22 to 3:9, while it would be difficult to find a paragraph upon the freedom of the will comparable to that in Ecclesiasticus 15:11-20. For the history of the canon of the Old Testament, the prologue of Ecclesiasticus is of inestimable importance. Such a fish story as found in Tobit 6 and 11, the twentieth century cannot duplicate. Present day short story writers could get a suggestion or two from Judith 13 where a Jewish heroine smites twice the huge neck of Holofernes, overflown with wine, takes away his head from him and gives it to her maid who puts it into her bag of victuals. Or consider Ezra's creative feat:

> 'So in 40 days were written 94 books. And it came to pass when the 40 days were fulfilled, the Most High spoke unto me, saying: "The 24 books that thou hast written publish, that the worthy and unworthy may read therein; but the 70 last thou shalt keep to deliver them to the wise among the people".'

6. *The Pseudepigrapha*(11)

Some very significant Jewish writings were composed between the second pre-Christian century and the second century of the Christian era which failed to obtain a place even in the Alexandrian canon. They appeared under assumed names, that is, they are pseudonymous and therefore are designated Pseudepigrapha.

Of these Pseudepigrapha, only IV Ezra succeeded in securing sanction for ecclesiastical use and appears at present as one of the Apocrypha in the appendix of the Revised Version. Jewish legalism repudiated these compositions, and the Septuagint does not contain them. And yet they are of extraordinary religious significance. Without them the history of primitive Christianity would be less understood. There are reminiscences of the Ahikar story in three Old Testament books and half a dozen New Testament books not to refer to the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha. How could 'Son of Man' be interpreted without the background of the Ethiopic Enoch? Or how could the demonology of the New Testament be comprehended apart from these productions? Jude is certainly acquainted with both the Assumption and the Testament of Moses.

In the *First Book of Adam and Eve*,(12) Eve takes all blame for the fall upon herself. 'I alone caused thy servant to fall

from the garden into this lost estate; from light into this darkness; and from the abode of joy into prison.' Building the first of all altars, Adam and Eve thus entreat God, 'Forgive us our trespass and our sin.'(13) The first twins were Cain and Luluwa, signifying respectively 'hater' and 'beautiful'; the second twins were Abel and Aklia.(14) After the murder of Abel, Cain married Luluwa and moved away.(15)

Is there anything new under the sun? The following is a description of ancient cities from the *Letter of Aristeas*.(16)

> 'The cities which are large and enjoy a corresponding prosperity are well populated, but they neglect the country districts, since all men are inclined to a life of enjoyment, for everyone has a natural tendency towards the pursuit of pleasure.'

The Fourth Book of Maccabees(17) puts into a single sentence the whole philosophy of mankind.

> 'For in the day when God created man, he implanted in him his passions and inclinations, and also, at the very same time, set the mind on a throne amid the senses to be his sacred guide in all things; and to the mind he gave the Law, by the which if a man order himself, he shall reign over a kingdom, that is temperate, and just, and virtuous, and brave.'

How is this as a description of old-time bankers?(18)

> 'Our people were deeply angered by this announcement, and protested strongly, considering it an outrageous thing for those who had entrusted their deposits to the temple treasury to be robbed of them.'

The fourth and fifth chapters of Fourth Maccabees enable the penologist to compare ancient methods of torture with those of the Christian inquisition or twentieth century third degree, for the guards produced 'wheels, and joint-dislocators, and racks, and bone-crushers, and catapults, and cauldrons, and braziers, and thumb-screws, and iron claws, and wedges, and branding irons' and used them.

The Story of Ahikar, grand vizier of Assyria, who had sixty wives but no son, abounds in proverbs concerning all the needs of men from money and women and dress to business and friends, and contains a picture of an extraordinary bit of treachery and its requital, 'for he who digs a pit for his brother shall fall into it; and he who sets up traps shall be caught in them.'

In *The Testament of Gad* are descriptions of hatred and of forgiveness not to be matched anywhere:

> 'Hatred, therefore, is evil, for it constantly mateth with lying, speaking against the truth; and it maketh small things to be great, and causeth the light to be darkness, and calleth the sweet bitter, and teacheth slander, and kindleth wrath, and stirreth up war, and violence, and all covetousness; it filleth the heart with evils and devilish poison.'
>
> 'Love ye, therefore, one another from the heart; and if a man sin against thee, cast forth the poison of hate and speak peaceably to him, and in thy soul hold not guile; and if he confess and repent, forgive him.
>
> 'But if he deny it, do not get into a passion with him, lest catching the poison from thee he take to swearing and so thou sin double. And though he

> deny it and yet have a sense of shame when reproved, give over reproving him. For he who denieth may repent so as not again to wrong thee; yea he may also honor thee and be at peace with thee. And if he be shameless and persist in his wrong doing, even so forgive him from the heart and leave to God the avenging.'(19)

7. *Daniel*

The Hebrew Bible consists of three parts, the Torah, or Law; the Nebiim, or prophets; the Kethubim, or Hagiographa, or Writings. This third section of the scriptures of Israel was formed between the early second century before the Christian era and the destruction of Jerusalem under Hadrian. Judaism unlike Christianity does not assign the book of Daniel to the prophetic section but to the Hagiographa. For Daniel was written in the period of the Maccabean revolution and not in the time of Cyrus.(20)

The Book of Daniel is an apocalypse, a pseudonymous document written to encourage suffering Israel to continue its resistance to Antiochus IV Epiphanes. It sought to reduce the present conflict, struggle, sorrow, and tragedy by outlining a glorious coming period of joy and bliss.(21)

When Christianity took over the Old Testament in its Greek form with the Hebrew three-fold division of the collection obliterated and the time of origin of the Book of Daniel forgotten, it located Daniel among the prophets. It was now held that Daniel originated in the sixth century before the Christian era. Hence, it must be viewed as prediction whereas originally it narrated events between Nebuchadrezzar and Antiochus IV from the perspective of the second century.

In the apocalyse of Daniel and its companion book, the so-called Revelation of John, Christianity had two books of mystery with which its theologians could play, making their interpretation a tug of war between error and nonsense. No books of the Bible have summoned more students to unravel their mysteries. It has only been within the present age that 'prophecy' has come to be understood as apocalypse. Hitherto it had fashioned hard and fast programs for Christianity, depreciated order and glorified chaos, made history arbitrary, and removed God from this world. Religious hysteria was the outcome whether one examines the earlier period with its Montanism, the medieval period with its Joachimism, the Reformation with its Muenster Anabaptists and Fifth Monarchy Men or the modern period with its Millerism, Adventism, Larkinism, Millennialdawnism and all the other vagrant types of prophetic enthusiasm.

This Christian attempt to reinterpret an Old Testament apocalypse as 'prophecy' has wrought irreparable ruin.

8. *The Holy Book*

In 1647, the Westminster Confession of Faith stated that '*the Old Testament in Hebrew* (which was the native language of the people of God of old), *and the New Testament in Greek* (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), *being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages*, are therefore authentical; so as in all controversies of religion the Church is finally to appeal to them.'(22) This is the classical statement of the conservative Protestant attitude toward the Bible, according to which the Bible is infallible and self-interpreting.

Catholicism also quotes the Bible as final authority, although 'it is permitted to no one to interpret the Sacred Scripture', contrary to the sense 'which our holy Mother Church both held and holds, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scripture'.

Now it is necessary to observe that the documents of the New Testament do not claim that the New Testament is 'inspired'. How could they? Not one of them anticipated inclusion in a holy list. The New Testament is the result of second century Christian controversy. New Testament statements regarding inspiration when involving a holy book prevailingly refer to the Old Testament. The word 'scripture' or 'scriptures' wherever found in the New Testament is concerned with one or several of the sacred books of the Jewish Bible. The only exception occurs in a mid-second century Christian book known as Second Peter. The famous verse, II Timothy 3:16, 'All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness' teaches either that a portion or all of the Old Testament is 'God-breathed' but makes no such claim for the writings of the New Testament. I Peter 1:20f knows that 'no prophecy of the Scripture [the Old Testament] is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God then spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' The statements of Revelation 22:18ff of course apply only to the Johannine apocalypse. Ideas first associated with the canonization of Old Testament books were only much later applied to New Testament documents.

And canonization of the Old Testament in its earlier stages did not mean the establishment of a holy literalism. The chronology of Genesis according to the Hebrew text differs

from that of the Samaritan Pentateuch and that of the Greek translation of the Old Testament. A canonical Torah did not at first signify 'a canonical text of the Torah'. Judaism of the period of primitive Christianity had not completely canonized the letter of the Torah. The underlying motive for the canonization of the writings of the Old Testament was the desire of devout Jews to live according to the will of Yahweh.(23)

Christianity did not even invent the idea of a holy book and its methods of interpreting the sacred volume were likewise borrowed from Judaism.

9. *Monotheism*

By monotheism is meant the 'doctrine of the soleness of God', the belief that there is but one God, not the recognition of the exclusive rights of the ethnic god within his area. It is the conscious denial of the existence of other gods.(24)

Faint beginnings of monotheism emerge with the eighth century prophets and in Deuteronomy. Unconditioned, convinced monotheism exists from the Babylonian exile onward. The prophet of the exile speaks decisively.

> *'I am God alone'*(25)

> *'I am evermore the same,*
> *I am the first and the last;*
> *my hand laid the foundations of the earth,*
> *my right hand spread the skies above;*
> *whenever I call them,*
> *they answer to the summons.*(26)

Among the reasons for the birth of monotheism may be mentioned contact with the world-sovereignty and civilization of Babylon as depicted in the stirring lines met with in Isaiah 41:1ff and 47:12ff. The plight of Israel was but a necessary part of the transformation of the world; its suffering was for its good; Israel had not been rejected. Hence Israel's God who was disposing of all these untoward events with a view to the redemption of his people must be the one and only God. His power and greatness are cosmic. The lesser gods fade away into oblivion and nothingness. The Eternal is the creator of the world and the determiner of history.

'For I the Eternal your God hold
you by the hand,
whispering, "Fear not, I will help you"
Fear not, puny Jacob, petty Israel,
I will help you,
Your champion is the Majestic One of Israel'
'What has occurred I foretold long ago:
it fell from my lips, I predicted it,
then suddenly I acted, and it was done.'
"Tis like the days of Noah;
for as then I swore
that Noah's waters should flood
earth no more,
so now I swear that nevermore
will I rebuke you in my wrath.
Though mountains be removed,
and hills be shaken,
never shall my love leave you,
my compact for your welfare
shall stand firm:

so promises the Eternal in his pity.'
'I, I am the Eternal,
there is no savior besides me.
'Twas I who promised to save,
I who fulfilled what I foretold . . .
From of old I am God,
and from henceforth the same;
No one can snatch out of my hand,
and what I do none can reverse.'

But one 'judge of all the earth' implies one law for all. Monotheism meant justice and moral order. Under it the peoples of the earth become one.(27)

The monotheism so characteristic of Israel was transmitted to Christianity and to Islam. And the metaphysics of Christianity has not overcome it.

The highest compliment ever paid Jewish monotheism comes from the pen of one well-acquainted with the tortuous history of Christian doctrine, Adolf von Harnack:

> 'To say that the victory of Christianity was a victory of Christ is true; but it is also true to say that Christianity simply supplied the form in which syncretistic monotheism won the day.(28)

10. *The Decalogue*

Throughout the story of Christianity, the decalogue has represented the totality of Christian conduct. The ten commandments have always been the scripture within the scriptures. The decalogue has ever been 'the law of God, pure and untainted with anything base'. With the exception of the sabbath enactment, the ten commandments were laws of nature for ancient and medieval Christians. Catechumens

committed them to memory and they acquired special significance in the confessional.

Martin Luther put it very frankly:

> 'Thus we have in the Ten Commandments a summary of divine instruction, telling us what we have to do to make our whole life pleasing to God, and showing us the true source and fountain from and in which all good works must spring and proceed; so that no work or anything can be good and pleasing to God, however great and costly in the eyes of the world, unless it is in keeping with the Ten Commandments.'(29)

Not one of the ten commandments has preserved its original significance either within Judaism or within Christianity. The various Christian groups also use different texts, Deuteronomy 5 or Exodus 20, and enumerations of the ten words. The sum of the ten commandments is sometimes said to be, 'To love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our souls, with all our strength, and with all our mind; and our neighbor as ourselves.' Yet this summary merely combines two passages from the Pentateuch so that Christianity has found it well nigh impossible to escape on the ethical side from the mother religion.(30)

11. *The Prophets*

Hebraism has its distinct place in ethics because of the prophets. The monotheism of Israel was ethical. Its chief representatives were the prophets. The religion of the prophets was unique. Nowhere else in antiquity is their peculiar combination of religion and morality encountered. The prophets were the first clearly to discern what is essen-

tial to a universal religion. They made Israel the prophet of humanity. Their goal was the reign of a holy God upon earth. For more than twenty-six hundred years their message has been summoning all men to ethical and social repentance. When their utterances are read today they are as modern as if composed yesterday.

Jesus was a prophet. His life was nourished by Amos and Hosea and Jeremiah and the Isaiahs. He too was under the spell of the moral law. He too called for purity of heart and universal love. He too lived in intimate fellowship with the God of the prophets. In him their religion was again real and practical. The religion he founded has in its best moments heeded the exhortations of the Old Testament prophets.

The just God of Amos, caring naught for the cultus at Bethel, desiring only the good, advocate of the poor, opposed to the unjust rich and the exploitation of the needy; the loving Father of Hosea; the holy, majestic, absolute, overworldly God of Isaiah; the personal, near, challenging God of Jeremiah; the God of the prophet of the exile who interpreted Israel as servant and death as triumph; and the God who asks of men 'to be just and kind and live in quiet fellowship with their God'—can the twentieth century dispense with these portraits of God?

To know the God of the prophets is to judge fairly the cause of the poor and the needy. Modern Christianity will some day appreciate that it cannot escape its duty of ethicizing all the relationships of life. People are weary of quarrels over doctrinal formulas and devotion to particular kinds of organization, and 'dangling little spotless babies over a Christian font but remaining dumb as an oyster to conditions that ruin children faster than the church can baptize

them.' If the Christianity of the future subscribes to the true test of the religious quality of a human being, proposed by Eliot of Harvard, as love for man, it will be because it has returned to the gospel of Jesus and of the prophets.(31)

12. *Institutions*

Sabbath observance was considered distinctive of Judaism by the Greeks and Romans. Only slight Christian sects have continued the observance of the seventh day as Sabbath. Yet many Christian groups have applied to the first day of the week the rules and restrictions concerned with the seventh day. Calvin stigmatizes this arbitrary procedure as the changing of the day because of contempt for the Jews. It is a permanent achievement of Judaism to have caused the western world to set apart one day in seven as a period of rest and of devotion.

The Jewish synagogue represents democracy, fellowship, discipline, worship without sacrifice, regular religious instruction, and a number of social and economic values. The adoption of its simple service including confession, prayer, reading of the scriptures, and sermon prevented Christianity from becoming a mere philosophy or mystery. The heads of early Christian churches were teachers. The ministry was not hereditary but ordained by the laying on of hands. Christian differences of opinion and practice were settled by synods. The charitable funds of the early church were raised by free-will offerings. The Jewish idea of the kings as an 'anointed of the Lord' made it possible to argue that he owes obedience to God's law. When the later medieval State absorbed some of the prerogatives of the Church it also inherited legal principles of Jewish origin. Henry VIII in 1540 established seven cities of refuge. Thus in a hundred

ideas and practices of the modern state and of Christianity, the influence of the institutions of Judaism lingers.(32)

13. *Jewish Influence upon Medieval Christianity*

Jerome, who was largely responsible for the Latin text of the medieval Bible, studied Hebrew in Rome under a converted Jew and in Palestine under Jewish rabbis. Hebrew letters appear in Latin manuscripts of early date. Stephen Harding's revision of the Latin text of the Bible for the use of the monks of the Cistercian order was made with the aid of Jewish scholars.

Jewish scholars were intermediaries between Greek philosophy and Christian scholasticism. For hundreds of years before they reached the Latin West, Greek views were being analyzed by Arabic scholars. Translations from the Arabic transmitted by Hebrew thinkers made them available in the West. Judaism was discussing Plato and Aristotle when medieval Christianity was confined to the Latin. The Dominicans perused the works of Maimonides; the Franciscans those of Avicebron. Albertus Magnus who leaned heavily upon Averroes, Isaac, Avicebron, and Maimonides, introduced the western world to 'the whole sum of knowledge and thought developed from Aristotle and his Arabian commentators'. Thomas Aquinas was under the tutelage of Maimonides to such an extent that he adopted not merely the latter's mistaken exegesis but his rationalization of sin and penalty as well.

Roger Bacon regarded the patriarchs and the prophets as the first philosophers. Nicholas of Lyra was so dependent upon the Hebrew Rashi in his exegetical work that his opponents dubbed him 'ape of Rashi'. But the theories of Nicholas were being taught at the University of Erfurt when

Luther studied there. And some thought that Luther 'would not have danced if Lyra had not piped'. The fourteenth and fifteenth centuries witnessed attempts at translation of the Old Testament directly from the Hebrew into Castilian.

Luther was in his earlier period so pro-Jewish as to write

> 'They are blood-relations of the Lord; therefore, if it were proper to boast of flesh and blood, the Jews belong to Christ more than we. I beg, therefore, my dear Papists, if you become tired of abusing me as a heretic, that you begin to revile me as a Jew.'

Luther was not too well acquainted with the Hebrew but he understood how to incorporate the latest results of the study of the Hebrew into his translation of the Bible into German. With the help of his Hebrew colleagues on the faculty of the University of Wittenberg or through the use of the *Postilla* of Lyra he had access to the commentaries of the rabbis of the medieval period. Luther knew only too well that no original work upon the Bible was possible without a knowledge of the results of Hebrew study.

> 'Without this language there can be no understanding of the Scriptures, for the New Testament, although written in Greek, is full of Hebraisms; it is rightly said that the Hebrews drink from the fountains; the Greeks from the streams, and the Latins from the pools . . . The translators of the Septuagint were unskilled in Hebrew; and their version is extremely poor, even though literal.'

European languages have not escaped the influence of the Hebrew Bible. The hybrid Jehovah composed of the

consonants of the Hebrew word *JHWH* and the vowels of the Hebrew word *adonai* is not met with prior to the late medieval period. Because the Hebrews reverently refused to pronounce the name of their God, Christians call God 'Lord'. *Benedico* meant originally to speak well of, through association with the Hebrew word for blessing it came to signify the employment of a 'formula conveying spiritual beneficence'. The Greek word *angelos* meant messenger; through connection with the Hebrew, it became messenger of God. The Greek word *diabolos* signified a calumniator. But the Greek translators of the Old Testament used it of Satan. Later *diabolus* was confused with *daimon*, and the English *devil*, the German *Teufel*, and French *diable* were born. *Paradise* began as the park of a Persian noble and was taken over in transliteration by the Greeks. When the Septuagint used the word for the garden of Eden, it became a permanent word in the vocabulary of the western world.(33)

14. *Jewish Influence upon Modern Christianity*

A revival of Hebrew studies accompanied the Reformation. Latin, French, and English had been the languages of culture; for Erasmus they were Latin, Greek, and Hebrew. Giovanni Pico Della Mirandola believed that the Jewish Cabala contained all the dogmas of Christianity; 'there is no science that can more firmly convince us of the divinity of Christ than magic and cabala.' Johann Reuchlin introduced Hebrew into the university curriculum, defended the Jews against accusations of heresy because they were under the protection of the German Empire, and opposed the burning of Hebrew books. During the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, the Cabala, that is, 'the esoteric or mystic doctrine concerning God and the universe, asserted to have

come down as a revelation to elect saints from a remote past and preserved only by a privileged few' became much interwoven with Christian mysticism. A complete Hebrew Bible was printed in 1488; in 1517, the year of the posting of the ninety-five theses of Luther, the first Rabbinic Bible; and between 1520 and 1523, the first complete edition of the Babylonian Talmud in fifteen volumes. Baruch Spinoza not only profoundly influenced the development of modern philosophy but was also the harbinger of the historical interpretation of the Bible by his *Tractatus Theologicopoliticus*.

The Old Testament, the Hebrew language, and especially the Pentateuch played a major rôle in the history of the British colonies in America whether we study its employment by Puritan, Episcopalian, Baptist or Quaker.

Jewish contributions to general culture during the modern age are so superior and varied as to require volumes for their cataloguing. In literature and journalism, in drama and music, in the plastic arts, in philosophy and law, in archaeology and philology, in mathematics and invention, in exploration and universal peace, in economics and sociology, in medicine and physics—to mention a few realms of achievement, the modern Jew has added much to the progress of civilization. Names such as Marx, Israels, Ehrlich, Schnitzler, Wassermann, Brandes, Brandeis, Mendes, Pulitzer, Fried, Michelson, Heyse, Lippmann suggest an entire Jewish *Who's Who*.(34)

CHAPTER VII

From Moses to Midnight

Many Christian interpreters of Judaism assume that the story of mankind begins with Israel. For many Christians the history of the world still begins in 4004 B.C.E. One revised chronology, however, lets 'ancient history' commence some 300,000 years ago, lets the 'medieval period' end three and one-half millennia before Christ, makes the lower cut for the 'modern age' about the middle of the eighteenth century, and confines the *novissima historia* to the last two centuries.(1)

Actually, Israel was a new-comer among the ancient Semites.

Formerly, the religion of Israel was regarded as the primitive form of all religion; today it is known to have been relatively late and advanced product of the Semitic religious development.

The holy writings of Israel are by no means the oldest historical and religious literature but originated in a later environment against the background of several centuries of religious progress. The song of Deborah regarded as among the most ancient bits of Hebrew literature is assigned to the period of the conquest of Palestine while the book of Daniel was composed about 165 B.C.E. Judaism continued the debate upon its list of sacred books to at least 135 C.E. The books now in the Old Testament originated in the course of a dozen centuries; their selection and authorization as *holy* literature, required almost eight centuries.

The Jewish nation as a consolidation of the more loosely related tribes emerged about 1000 B.C.E.

Israel's separatism is historically based—a fact which only a few of the critics of Judaism seem to know. Israel did not originate in Palestine. The older cultures and cults of Canaan were alien to it. Israel by its origin and early history was different. Migrating from the vicinity of Mount Sinai, it brought Yahweh along into a strange country, reaching self-consciousness amid the semi-nomadic life on the border of Canaan, when the tribes coalesced as sacred units about common holy places.

1. *To the Babylonian Exile*

Something like religious unity was achieved by Israel in the time of Moses, who may be considered as the founder of the national religion of Yahweh. Under his successor, Joshua, portions of Palestine were subdued. This meant absorption from the older environment of Palestine. For two millennia the country had been the connecting link between the culture of the Tigris-Euphrates valley and the Nile region. Babylonians, Canaanites, Egyptians, Phoenicians, and Hittites had been there.

For about two hundred years the struggle for the possession of Canaan continued under tribal chieftains. As the Hebrews moved into rural districts, the Canaanites would shut themselves up within their walled towns. Yet the two peoples and the two religions were in constant contact, and the inevitable syncretism occurred. The preceding population fused with the incoming shepherds, and beginners in agriculture were modified by city points of view and life.

The old shrines of the gods of Canaan, Shechem, Hebron, Dan, Jerusalem, became the shrines of Yahweh. Long be-

fore the Solomonic temple was erected, Hebrew shrines were in use at Gibeon, Gilgal, Ophrah, Shiloh, Dan, Nob, and Bethel. The word 'baal' was incorporated in names bestowed upon the children of orthodox Israelites. A son of Saul was called Ishbaal; one of Jonathan, Meribaal; one of David, Baaliada. High place worship frowned upon in the days of Ezekiel was conducted five centuries earlier by the holy Samuel. Religious prostitution occurred at the temples and Yahweh worshippers like David possessed household gods. Gradually Yahweh took over characteristics of Canaanitish gods of agriculture.(2)

Under Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon, Israel became a monarchy with Jerusalem as capital and a temple of Yahweh as symbol of political and religious unity. But that progress had been too rapid became obvious upon the death of Solomon. Laws in the end must enforce themselves. Unity depends upon feeling much more than upon logic. The division of Israel, late in the tenth century, into two kingdoms, Ephraim and Judah, was due to the ancient democracy and opposition to the hurried elevation of one of the later tribes, Judah, to the centralization of power at Jerusalem, to the artificial removal of the natural centre of gravity in the North to the South quite as much as to the unendurable economic oppression of Solomon and the charming personality of Jeroboam.

The period of the divided kingdoms lasted from the rebellion against Rehoboam in the tenth century to the deportation of some of the northern tribes to Assyria toward the close of the eighth century. The northern kingdom known as Israel was frequently at war with the southern kingdom known as Judah. In the North there were numerous changes of dynasty; in the South, the line of David held fast.

For more than a century after the capture of Samaria, the kingdom of Judah survived. Deportations of the inhabitants of the southern kingdom to Babylon early in the sixth century marked the beginnings of a new age. About this time Judah undertook the selection and authorization of a list of sacred books as final for faith and for practice. The religion of Yahweh was becoming a book religion.

2. *Under Foreign Overlords*

For seven hundred years, from the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadrezzar to the final destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of the Roman emperor Hadrian, Israel was under foreign overlords. Theonly exception was the slight epoch of independence under the Maccabees.

Israel began to appreciate its sacred books while in Babylonia. Contact with Persia signified acquaintance with astral religion, spirits, and the doctrine of the resurrection from the dead. When some Hebrews returned to Jerusalem and vicinity to rebuild its temple and its walls, and to form a new Jewish religious and national community, a movement was inaugurated which under the later able leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah resulted in the establishment of Judaism. The law became obligatory for faith and practice about 444 B.C.E. This covenant determined the entire future of the Hebrews. Henceforth, in spite of the retention and elaboration of the cultus, the chief emphasis begins to be laid upon doctrine and ethics. The scribe more and more replaces the priest; the synagogue, the temple. It is well to remember that piety was not cancelled by legalism.

In 334 B.C.E., Alexander the Great crossed over into Asia. He swept down from the north and with titanic strength and bewildering speed, moved through the Orient, subdu-

ing his opponents, settling quarrels of countless princelets, establishing order, wedding Greek culture to Oriental life. This succession of events was so out of the ordinary that it was looked upon as beyond the achievement of mortal man. Here was the realization of the Oriental conception of the king as the incarnation of the deity.

Alexander was not slow to grasp the significance of this religious sentiment and therefore personally encouraged this dogma of the divine kingdom. He was granted divine honors by Asiatic and European Greeks, was known as the son of the god Ammon, and his last desire was to be buried in the oasis of Zeus Ammon. Thus was the Oriental view of a god-king inaugurating a new aeon fused with the Greek god-Savior idea. In 332, Alexandria was founded. By the summer of 325, Alexander's domains reached the Indus. He died in 323.

Under Alexander and his successors, the Jews were welcomed at Alexandria. Henceforward, there were two types of Judaism: Alexandrian, broad, liberal, rather pro-Greek, finally acknowledging some 46 sacred books, and Palestinian Judaism, employing the Aramaic, conservative, anti-Greek, acknowledging some 39 sacred books.

The generals of Alexander the Great divided his empire. After numerous realignments, the western part of that empire was in 301 divided beween Ptolemy who acquired Egypt and Seleucus who received the major portion of Syria. The inevitable quarrel for the possession of Palestine, connecting link between Asia and Africa, an ancient Belgium, ensued. Ptolemy was recognized as in charge of Palestine about mid-third century.

Under the mild and generous rule of the Ptolemies, the Jews continued to promote their religious ideals. But the

Seleucids had by no means surrendered Palestine to Egypt for all time. They desired the country for geographical, economic, and political reasons. Palestine belonged by nature to Syria, the timber on Lebanon and the great trade-routes meant revenue, and this narrow stretch of land was the gateway to Egypt.

In 198 B.C.E., the issue was irrevocably settled, when Antiochus the Great annexed Palestine to his domain, in his general campaign for Egypt, Greece, and at last Italy. But Rome was on guard. Twice defeated by Roman armies, Antiochus began payment upon an indemnity of 15,000 talents.

Under the earlier Seleucids there was stricter supervision of the Jewish religion accompanied by slight attempts at Hellenization. There were three replies to these efforts on the part of Judaism: nationalism, inter-nationalism, and apocalypticism.(3)

3. *The Maccabees*

Judaism might have disappeared in the stream of Oriental-Hellenistic syncretism, if Antiochus IV Epiphanes, B.C.E. 175-164, had not sought to hasten the process unduly.

Upon the death of Antiochus the Great, Syria was thrown into chaos. The treasury was empty; the next installment on the heavy indemnity to Rome was due. From 189-176, Antiochus IV was a hostage at Rome to insure its payment. The Syrian government became a complicated machine for extorting and expressing taxes; the provinces were plundered; their temples were pillaged. In 175, Seleucus IV was assassinated.

His successor was the extravagant Antiochus IV, the apostle of Hellenism, reared at Rome, citizen of Athens, an

anticipation of modern metropolitan mayors, an ancient movie actor. Antiochus required a new sensation daily to keep him awake. He led the midnight chorus of the last keg party. He introduced the brutal gladiatorial combats to Antioch. He caused the principal city fountain to run with wine. The people thronging the gymnasium were served choice and costly perfumes without money and without price. A seven course dinner to a thousand guests was nothing out of the ordinary. Antiochus believed in passing prosperity around and issued bonds in quantity for unnecessary public works. Toward the end of a feast when the company had faded, a swaddled figure might be carried in and laid upon the ground, when 'suddenly to the notes of the symphony, it started from its wrappings, and the naked king stood there'. Antiochus IV Epiphanes could make whoopee.(4)

In his more serious intervals, Antiochus concentrated upon a pan-Hellenic confederation uniting all Greek-speaking nations against Rome. The first step in this gigantic project was the annexation of Egypt. Rome cruelly blocked the scheme. In a rage on this account, Antiochus was informed that Jerusalem favored Ptolemy. Returning from Egypt, he plundered the temple at Jerusalem, assuming that one lesson in violence would teach the obstinate Jews to submit to Hellenization. Antiochus had another guess coming. Two years later, in 168, he not only entered the holy of holies in the temple at Jerusalem, but desecrated both it and the great altar with the blood of swine. He defiled the sacred books of the law. He substituted an altar to Zeus for the altar of Yahweh. He forbade the observance of the Sabbath, the practice of synagogue worship, and other customs of the Jews. He listed Jewish separatism for annihilation. So the

long awaited duel for supremacy between the religion of Yahweh and Hellenic culture was on.

What happened in consequence of this fool-hardiness is recorded in First and Second Maccabees. The period of the Maccabean revolution and independence extends from B.C.E. 168-63. Within five years, under the skilful leadership of the valiant Judas, the Maccabee, religious liberty had been attained. The struggle for political independence continued until 143 under the brothers of Judas. In 141, Simon by popular vote became hereditary high-priest, military ruler, and civil head. During the reign of John Hyrcanus, 135-105, Pharisees and Sadducees appeared. The 'Golden Age' under Queen Alexandra, 78-69, was followed by civil strife terminating in the appeal to Pompey.

The Jewish literary productivity during and after the Maccabean struggle was considerable. It included Daniel, portions of Zechariah and Isaiah, the completion of the Psalter and of the Greek Translation of the Old Testament, the Aristeas letter, I, II Maccabees, Tobit, Judith, III Sibylline Oracles, the Ethiopic Enoch, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, the book of Jubilees.

Of the many acts of heroism, marking the course of the Maccabean revolution, that of the 'constancy and cruel death of seven brothers and their mother in one day, because they would not eat swine's flesh at the King's commandment' has been recited in Israel for over two thousand years.(5)

4. *The Roman Period*

The Roman overlordship of Palestine began under Pompey, 63 B.C.E., and ended with the revolt against the emperor Hadrian, two centuries later, 132-135 C.E. Julius Caesar

appointed Herod governor of Galilee. From 37 to 4 B.C.E., Herod the Great ruled all Palestine as king. For a decade, B.C.E. 4 to C.E. 6, Judea was under Archelaus as ethnarch. When Quirinius took a census in the interest of bigger and better taxes, the Zealots organized against him and Rome. For thirty-five years, 6-41 C.E., Judea was under Roman procurators. Herod Agrippa I acted as king during the next three years, when Judea again became directly subject to Rome under procurators. The rebellion against Nero broke out in 66. During the next year Galilee was conquered. In 70, Jerusalem was captured by Titus, its temple having been burned during the siege. Palestine became an imperial province. The Jerusalem cultus was abolished, its revenue being diverted to the Capitoline Jupiter. Half a century after the Judean revolt against the Roman empire, the diaspora in Egypt, Cyprus, and Mesopotamia, also rose in rebellion. It continued unsuccessfully for three years. Again in 132, under Bar Kochba, Palestine once more opposed Rome for abolishing the national rite, founding a Roman colony upon the site of Jerusalem, and erecting a temple to Jupiter there. In spite of unparalleled heroism, the Jews met with disastrous defeat and were deprived of their homeland.(6)

How little the career of Jesus influenced the history of Judaism is witnessed to by Schuerer who in his 2000 page *History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ* devotes but three-fourths of a single page to the life of Jesus.(7)

5. *The Renewal of Judaism*

Christianity should often remind itself that Israel's history after the birth of Jesus covers a longer stretch of time than before. Even if the exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt should finally be assigned to the fourteenth or fifteenth century be-

fore the Christian era, six-tenths of the total span of Hebrew history lies in the Christian era.(8)

Four main periods are recognized in the post-Roman phase of Judaism. The classic period extends from C.E. 135 to 700; the medieval, from 700-1780; the modern from 1780-1917; the recent, from 1917 to the present time. During the ancient or classic period, Judaism laid the foundations of a new type of life and culture, independent of nationalism and devoted to the exaltation and interpretation of the law. During the dark medieval period of more than a thousand years, Judaism was bitterly persecuted by Christianity and sheltered by Islam. Emancipation came during the modern period. Since 1917, Zionism has been more than a theory.

Emperor Hadrian failed to crush the Judaism of Palestine and of the Mediterranean world. Successful large-scale rebellions were no longer possible, and the number and ability of the Jews in Palestine continually depreciated. But in the diaspora Judaism was strong. Jerusalem was proscribed to all Jews. Southern Palestine was deserted. But at Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Caesarea important Jewish activities were conducted. In 212, all inhabitants of the Roman empire, including Jews, acquired Roman citizenship.

Pessimism pervaded the feelings of many Jews when the temple was consumed by flames and the city of David fell to the Romans. The first Jewish reaction is recorded in IV Ezra in many splendidly hopeless passages.(9)

Such desperate interpretations of life yielded shortly to hope of better things. Judaism continued to believe in God and to work feverishly for the new age. Its scholarship preserved the sayings of its renowned rabbis, produced the Mishna and Gemara and within four centuries after the establishment of Aelia Capitolina where Jerusalem had been

the Talmud existed in both Palestinian and Babylonian forms.

A large Jewish colony in Mesopotamia was ruled by a descendant of David as Resh Galuta who enjoyed autonomous administrative and judicial rights. He was responsible to his overlord for collection of taxes and the raising of the Jewish military quota. After the destruction of Jerusalem the self-consciousness of the Babylonian diaspora increased, resulting a century later in its independence from Palestinian control. The last Parthian kings favored Mesopotamian Judaism. When Persian culture and religion returned under the Sassanids, fanatical Persian priests succeeded in restricting the religious privileges of the Jews. There followed a persecution in the course of which the head of Judaism was killed, the celebration of the Sabbath was forbidden, the synagogues were demolished, and Jewish children placed under Persian priests for religious instruction.

6. *Christianity the Imperial Religion*

When Christianity, under Constantine and his successors, became a legal and thereupon the imperial religion, the status of Judaism was lowered. Although Judaism was as yet a legal religion with its cultus under the protection of imperial laws, church councils proceeded to social separation of Jew and Christian. Special enactments later incorporated in the codes of Theodosius and Justinian gradually reduced the Jews to second-rate citizens. Justinian deprived them of all national honors and questioned the validity of their testimony in court. In 305, Spanish Christianity forbade marriage between Jew and Christian under penalty of a five years' excommunication. For a Jew and Christian to

eat together signified exclusion from the eucharist: 'if, then, any ecclesiastic or any of the faithful partakes of food with Jews, he shall be deprived of communion so that this may be corrected.' In 315, Constantine forbade conversion to Judaism. In 339 marriage of a Jew with a Christian became a capital offense for the Jew. After 357, the acceptance of Judaism was punished by confiscation of property. In 404, the Jews were excluded from military service and public office and in 439 Jewish propaganda was penalized with death.(10)

A few items from Gibbon should be set down here. Cyril, Christian patriarch of Alexandria, did not like the 40,000 Jews dwelling there.

> 'The toleration and even the privileges of the Jews, who had multiplied to the number of 40,000, were secured by laws of the Caesars and Ptolemies, and a long prescription of seven hundred years since the foundation of Alexandria. Without any legal sentence, without any royal mandate, the patriarch, at dawn of day, led a seditious multitude to the attack of the synagogues. Unarmed and unprepared, the Jews were incapable of resistance; their houses of prayer were levelled with the ground, and the episcopal warrior, after rewarding his troops with the plunder of their goods, expelled from the city the remnant of the unbelieving nation.'

And Cyril went unpunished.

The Christian emperor Justinian, ever zealous with fire and sword in behalf of the unity of Christianity, compelled the Jews,

'who had been gradually stripped of their immunities, to observe the festival of Easter the same day on which it was celebrated by the Christians . . . The Samaritans were finally subdued by the regular forces of the East: 20,000 were slain, 20,000 were sold by the Arabs to the infidels of Persia and India, and the remains of that unhappy nation atoned for the crime of treason by the sin of hypocrisy. It has been computed that 100,000 Roman subjects were extirpated in the Samaritan war, which converted the once fruitful province into a desolate and smoking wilderness.'

Sisebut, a devout Catholic Gothic king, also was convinced that he was fulfilling God's will by persecuting the Jews of Spain.

'Ninety thousand Jews were compelled to receive the sacrament of baptism; the fortunes of the obstinate infidels were confiscated, their bodies were tortured; and it seems doubtful whether they were permitted to abandon their native country. The excessive zeal of the Catholic king was moderated, even by the clergy of Spain, who solemnly pronounced an inconsistent sentence: that the sacraments should not be forcibly imposed; but that the Jews who had been baptized should be constrained, for the honor of the church, to persevere in the external practice of a religion which they disbelieved and detested. Their frequent relapses provoked one of the successors of Sisebut to banish the whole nation from his dominions; and a council of Toledo

> published a decree, that every Gothic king should swear to maintain this salutary edict.'

This occurred in Italy in the time of Theodoric.

> The Italians 'respected the armed heresy of the Goths; but their pious rage was safely pointed against the rich and defenceless Jews, who had formed their establishments at Naples, Rome, Ravenna, Milan, and Genoa, for the benefit of trade and under the sanction of the laws. Their persons were insulted, their effects were pillaged, and their synagogues were burnt by the mad populace of Ravenna and Rome, inflamed, as it should seem, by the most frivolous or extravagant pretences.'(11)

7. *Mohammed*

The founder of Mohammedanism had come under the influence of both Judaism and Christianity. He preached monotheism, a coming judgment and against idolatry. For a time he was generally friendly toward the Jews but later persecuted Judaism and reduced it as well as Christianity to a position of dependence. Some Jewish communities were decimated. In conquered Mohammedan territory, Jews who refrained from ridicule of the prophet and of the cultus of Islam and who did not oppose adoption of Mohammedanism could remain true to their ancestral religion without penalty. Riding upon horses was forbidden, and differentiating garments had to be worn.

Under the Arabs, the Jews of Mesopotamia enjoyed considerable freedom. The 'prince of the exile' was restored; the heads of Jewish institutes, called Gaon, or Excellency, were authorized to collect taxes and to administer the law

from the Jewish point of view. The period, 650 to 1040 C.E., is known as that of the Geonim whose jurisdiction was recognized by all Judaism. Migrations to aid colonization of Palestine were undertaken. During the eleventh century the fall of the caliphate of Baghdad and the inroads of the Seljuks were accompanied by a loss of Jewish freedom.

The farflung Jewish diaspora extended to North Africa and Europe. During the tenth and eleventh centuries the Arabs in Spain favored Judaism, appointing the rabbis judges of Jewish controversies. Even some Catholic kings there were conspicuous for their tolerance. Alfonso of Castile and Peter of Aragon proscribed the cry *Hep, Hep* in their lands. HEP, *Hierosolyma Est Perdita*, 'Jerusalem is lost', was the cry of the medieval Christian crusaders who thus summoned themselves to the killing and plundering of Jews encountered on the way to the holy war against the Mohammedans in Palestine. About 1150 when the Almohades came into power, the lot of Spanish Judaism became precarious. Frequent persecution was alleviated because of the dependence of weak feudal lords upon the goodwill of the Jews.

Several of the most prominent Jewish scholars of the medieval period deserve special mention. Solomon Ibn Gabirol, poet and philosopher, patriot and astronomer, wrote *The Fountain of Life* which was translated from the Arabic into the Latin and much used by the Christian scholastics of the twelfth and later centuries. By composing a Hebrew grammar in verse he promoted the extension of his mother tongue. Rabbi Solomon Yitzhaki, or Rashi for short, has among his achievements a commentary upon the Bible and upon the Talmud. Abraham Ibn Ezra won a reputation as critic, philosopher, commentator, astronomer, and mathematician. Jehudah Halevi, physician and poet, Arabic scholar, con-

versant with the Greek, emphasized the relation between philosophy and religion. The greatest of all the Jewish scholars of the medieval period was Maimonides, Moses ben Maimon, court physician to the great Saladin, author of numerous books including *The Strong Hand*, a recital of Jewish story from Moses to his own day plus a systematic outline of Jewish law, and *A Guide to the Perplexed*, whose chapter on sacrifice was bitterly resented by some contemporaries. Yet the future granted Maimonides immortality—'from Moses unto Moses there has been none like unto Moses'; Moses ben Maimon of Spain was the successor of Moses of Sinai.(12)

8. *Midnight*

The Germanic groups, settled in Europe after the centuries of migration, were only gradually converted to Christianity. The Goths were the first Germans to accept Christianity. Their conversion to Arianism meant the transmission of this form of Christianity to the various Germanic tribes. Late in the fifth century the warlike Franks became Trinitarian or Catholic Christians. Two hundred years later Arianism had disappeared among the Germans, and the Catholic faith was being confessed.

As long as the governing classes among the Germans were Arian Christians, religious toleration prevailed among them, and the Jews were regarded and treated as Roman citizens. The adoption of trinitarianism and especially of Roman Catholicism affected the relation between Jew and Christian disastrously. Early in the seventh century, the Jews were expelled from France, while in Spain they were compelled to embrace Christianity and in 694 condemned to slavery.

Pope Gregory the Great formulated the regulations for the treatment of Jews by Christians, forbidding the employment of coercion and compulsory conversion, recommending concessions and persuasion, but *also demanding that no Jew transgress the decisions of church councils*. Hence letters of protection recommending defense of Jewish religion, life, property, and standing in court might be granted, but the adverse decrees of church councils could also be quoted. The empire of Charlemagne classified the Jews as aliens under imperial favor. They were after a time given the status of *servi camerae*, at first signifying immediate relation to the emperor or king, the direct payment of taxes into the imperial treasury, the immediate jurisdiction of the royal court, tax and market freedom throughout the realm. As a result of the ecclesiastical dogma, however, that the Jews must be considered as in everlasting slavery by the decree of God, this position of *servi camerae* came to mean that all Jews with their bodies and their goods were the actual property of the king who might arbitrarily dispose of their rights, property, and lives. Extortion, exile, persecution, and massacres could therefore be indulged in. Since the Jews could be classified as aliens economically as well as religiously and politically, participation in the ownership of land, industries, the products of manual labor, and of commerce could be denied them. Hence Jews learned how to 'keep their property in portable and liquid form'. Thus money-lending was more and more forced upon them as the only means of sustenance but this led to more ill-will against them because of high interest rates. Yet since kings and rulers collected from the Jews, the latter had to collect from the people. It was a struggle for existence. The wealth of the Jews was legitimate prey of the needs of the poor

All nations were cruel to the Jews, but local circumstances might alleviate the degree of pressure employed. Duruy does not miss the truth by much when he says: 'The Jews were like a sponge, which was allowed to fill itself with the gold of the middle classes and the nobility, and which was then squeezed into the royal treasury; at each reprieve the active tribe began anew to work, and the pressure recommenced as soon as they had repaired their fortunes.'

The causes for the Christian persecution of the Jew were economic, social, political, and religious. But the religious reason always took first honors. The violent persecution of the Jew by the Christian began at the time of the first Eastern crusade on the plea that it was futile for Christians to sacrifice their lives for the recovery of the holy places in Palestine while those 'actually responsible for the death of the Savior' living in Europe were left unmolested. Thousands of Jewish communities were pillaged and plundered and tens of thousands were slaughtered. Life could be purchased by accepting Christian baptism. 'But the more obstinate Jews opposed their fanaticism to the fanaticism of the Christians, barricaded their houses, and precipitating themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames, disappointed the malice or at least the avarice of their implacable foes.' Indeed, Jews of the town of Worms invented the fiction that they had been living there from the time of Ezra, fifth century before the Christian era, and therefore were in no wise responsible for the crucifixion of Jesus, or that they were descendants of the Roman soldiers who sacked Jerusalem!

Bishop after bishop encouraged Jew-baiting. A pope like Innocent III repeated the accusation that Jews secretly murdered Christians, held that Jews were under the curse of

God and condemned to serfdom, forbade their appearance in the streets at Easter, authorized their payment of an annual tax to the church, and deprived them of public office. The Jew was especially marked for insult by being forced to wear a distinguishing dress. The Dominicans and later the Jesuits were the bitterest enemies of the Jew. While some of the popes and bishops exonerated the Jews from accusations of ritual murder, monks and local clergy spread the gossip. And they could always be charged with procuring a *host* from a church and stabbing the 'body, blood, soul, and divinity of Christ' until it bled. Tens of thousands of Jews, more than 350 Jewish communities in Germany alone, lost their lives because people believed them guilty of producing the Black Death by mixing 'Christian hearts with the sacred wafer stolen from the churches'! In 1431, the Council of Basel excluded Jews from the universities, enforced segregation in the ghetto, and instituted conversional sermons. Pope Gregory XIII directed that sermons on the truth of Christianity be preached to the Jews of the Roman Ghetto every Saturday. Attendance was compulsory for Jews over twelve years of age. Whips enforced the regulation and also kept the congregation alert and attentive. Only in mid-nineteenth century was this mission to the Jews closed.

The Jewish midnight was the longest and the darkest in the history of any people.(13)

CHAPTER VIII

Against the Jews'

Every index of the writings of the Church Fathers contains an astonishing array of references to accusations against the Jews. These vary from mild errors to atrocities demanding vigorous denunciation and excoriation. *The Epistle of Barnabas* was among the first of the treatises against the Jews. Fathers like Justin the Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Eusebius of Caesarea, Cyril of Alexandria, Augustine participated in the debate with Judaism. Some of these writings attempt the conversion of the Jews to Christianity by appeal to prophecy; others seek to answer Jewish objections to Christian assumptions; others denounce the Jews because God has rejected them! (1)

1. *Dialogues with the Jews*

The Christian 'dialogue' with some Jew or other is a literary device to demonstrate the vulnerability of the Jew to the Christian apologetic. Of the real attitude of the Jew toward Christianity very little is learned. No actual discussion was conducted. Every rabbi knew his Hebrew and believed in his holy book and could not possibly have been so deferential and timid as Justin's Trypho when engaging in dialogue with some Christian philosopher—not to mention the improbability of his conversion to Christianity.

Justin the Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew* is a good illustration of second century Christian apologetic. A Christian philosopher meets a company of Jews in the vicinity of

the Xystus and converses with them about philosophy. At the close of the long colloquy the Jews confess themselves pleased with the data assembled and the Christian help provided for the understanding of their scriptures. The Christian always knows and is condescending; the Jew is a seeker after truth.

What was some of the information which second century Christianity desired to share with Judaism? Psalm 110 does not refer to Hezekiah nor Psalm 72 to Solomon. The Messiah must suffer and come again in his glory according to the Old Testament. Jews are not sons of Abraham. The 'twelve' bells on the high priest's robe were a figure of the twelve apostles. The oblation of fine flour was a figure of the Christian eucharist. Jesus was God and born from a virgin according to the prediction of Isaiah. Similar tradition regarding Bacchus, Hercules, and Aesculapius was invented by the devil. The mysteries of Mithras were derived by distortion from Daniel and Isaiah. In Exodus the name of God was Jesus. The gods of the nations are demons. Christians themselves debate the resurrection of the dead and a thousand years' reign of Christ in Jerusalem. The action of Hur and Aaron in supporting the outstretched hands of Moses an entire day signified beforehand the cross. The blessings of Joseph and the lifting up of the serpent in the wilderness and Psalm 22:16-18 and Isaiah 53 are all predictions of Jesus as Christ. The twenty-second psalm is filled with definitely fulfilled references to Christ. The Christians are the promised descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Christianity is the true Israel. The marriages of Jacob were a figure of the church. Leah represents Judaism and the synagogue; Rachel the Church.

> 'Jacob served Laban for speckled and many-spotted sheep; and Christ served, even to the slavery of the cross, for the various and many-formed races of mankind, acquiring them by the blood and mystery of the cross. Leah was weak-eyed; for the eyes of your souls are excessively weak. Rachel stole the gods of Laban, and has hid them to this day; and we have lost our paternal and material gods. Jacob was hated for all time by his brother; and we now, and our Lord himself, are hated by you and by all men, though we are brothers by nature. Jacob was called Israel; and Israel has been demonstrated to be the Christ, who is, and is called, Jesus.'(2)

On the basis of this allegorical interpretation of the Jewish Bible, Justin finally exhorts the Jews to be converted to Christianity. But they return thanks and leave him.

2. *Errors of the Jews*

In the *True Word* of Celsus, Jewish criticism of Christianity is epitomized. Judaism could not accept the Christian dogma of the virgin birth of Jesus. It questioned the childhood stories and miracles and the resurrection from the dead. The argument from prophecy was just as applicable to others. One cannot draw the rein on allegory. If the sufferings of Christ were voluntary, why should they have been grievous. Above all, Jewish Christians had abandoned the law of the fathers and such apostasy could not be overlooked. From the second century Christian point of view, each one of these criticisms was a Jewish error.

The principal errors of the Jews involved the trinity, the abrogation of the Mosaic law, and the messianic mission of

Jesus. The doctrines of the incarnation and the exaltation of a crucified Messiah were to them incredible.

In *An Answer to the Jews*, the Christian stalwart Tertullian reveals the clue to the error of the Jews. The Christian believes in two characters of the Messiah as depicted by the prophets and in two advents of the Messiah. Humility, ignobility, dishonor, unattractiveness, 'sordid attire', suffering were to be characteristic of the Messiah's first advent; sublimity, glory, honor, sovereignty were to be characteristic of the Messiah's second advent. Jesus of Nazareth has come in ignominy and shame and is to come in glory. Therefore, he has and will fulfill the Old Testament specifications. The Jew is in invincible error and ignorance because he believes only in a Messiah of glory. 'And thus to this present moment they affirm that their Messiah is not come, because He is not come in majesty; while they ignore the fact that He was first to come in humility.'(3)

3. *Denunciation of the Jews*

When Judaism refused conversion to Christianity and dared to criticize the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament and the contradictory elements in the gospels, some Christians resorted to cursing and reviling the Jews. The list includes names like Justin the Martyr, Tertullian, Origen, Cyprian, Chrysostom, Ephraim.

The Jews were accused of sending persons through the whole earth to spread calumnies on the Christians and of mocking Jesus in their synagogues. They were only nominally sons of God; actually they were 'parasites of Abraham', persecutors of the prophets, and 'Egyptian pollutions'. These polemics vary in tone from the moderate *Three Books of Testimonies* [*Against the Jews* by Cyprian in

which Christians are demonstrated to be the true children of God to the vituperations of Saint Ephraim the Syrian of which the following is a specimen.

> 'What is thine iniquity, O daughter of Jacob, that thy chastisement is so severe? Thou hast dishonored the King and the King's Son, thou shameless one and harlot! The King was dishonored in the wilderness and the King's Son again in Jerusalem. The Father was exchanged for a calf and for sundry similitudes, and the Son also was exchanged for a thief and a shedder of blood.'(4)

In eight orations, brilliant Chrysostom exhausts even his extended vocabulary in denunciation of the Jews, accusing them of pride of birth, obstinacy, vindictiveness, persecution, perversion of justice at the trial of Jesus, extreme cruelty, and of sole responsibility for the passion—'For Pilate contributed nothing in this matter, but they themselves did everything, becoming accusers and judges and executioners, and all.'(5)

4. *The Complete Exoneration of Pilate*

This complete exoneration of Pilate just noticed in Chrysostom is met with as early as the second century. Pilate has ceased to be a tool of the Jews. They are the actual perpetrators of the crime of passion week and of all its cruelties. 'All the synagogue of Israel did slay him.' The *Epistle of Barnabas* lets the Jews 'despise and pierce and mock and crucify' Jesus.(6) Justin the Martyr repeats all these charges and more:

> 'He endured all the sufferings which the devils instigated senseless Jews to inflict upon him.

> 'You have slain the Just One and his prophets before him, and now you reject those who hope in him . . . cursing in your synagogues those who believe on Christ.
> 'Crucified *under* Pontius Pilate by your nation.'(7)

Celsus, the severest ancient critic of Christianity had asked in his *True Word*, how it had happened that no calamity befell the judge of Jesus. If Jesus was God, why did not God punish Pilate for sending Jesus to the cross. For Pilate had met with no cruel fate. In the third century, the liberal Alexandrian Christian scholar, Origen, answered Celsus by asking why Pilate should have been punished by God. Pilate was innocent of the death of Jesus. Pilate did not condemn Jesus. The Jewish nation did that. And is God punishing this Jewish crime? Is God afflicting Israel? Why, Celsus, writes Origen, Israel 'has been condemned by God, and rent in pieces, and despised over the whole earth, in a degree far beyond what happened to Pentheus.'(8)

Cyprian of Carthage called attention to the refusal of the sun to shine at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus because of the cruelties of the Jews, while the author of the *Divine Institutes* insists that Pontius Pilate 'was overpowered both by their outcries, and by the instigation of Herod, the tetrarch, who feared lest he should be deposed from his sovereignty. He did not, however, himself pass sentence, but delivered him up to the Jews that they themselves might judge him according to their law.' Thereupon the Jews are represented as doing unto Jesus all those things which the Roman soldiers actually had done.(9)

5. *Christian Accommodation of the Old Testament*

In the Christian apologies the Jews are accused of mutilating the text of the Old Testament to get rid of precise predictions applicable only to Jesus of Nazareth. Historical criticism has not merely shown the charge unwarranted but has been obliged to call attention to Christian accommodation and perversion of Old Testament passages.(10)

Palestinian Judaism used the Hebrew text of the Old Testament. Christianity generally employed the Greek translation of the Old Testament which differed from the Hebrew in thousands of readings. Some of the Christian-Jewish points of difference can be thus accounted for. *The Epistle of Barnabas* quotes Isaiah 45:1 as 'The Lord said to *Christ*, my Lord' where the Hebrew reads, '*Cyrus*, my lord.' His quotation of 'healings' of Isaiah 58:8 as 'garments' is probably a slip of the pen.(11)

The *Dialogue with Trypho* acknowledges the variations between the Hebrew and Greek Old Testaments and then proceeds to accuse the Jews of corrupting the scripture text. Justin claims that the following sentences from Esdras have been removed by the Jews:

> 'And Esdras said to the people, This passover is our Savior and our refuge. And if you have understood, and your heart has taken it in, that we shall humble Him on a standard, and thereafter hope in Him, then this place shall not be forsaken forever, says the God of hosts. But if you will not believe Him, and will not listen to His declaration, you shall be a laughing-stock to the nations.'(12)

But these words cannot be found!

Jeremiah, according to Justin, somewhere said:

> 'The Lord God remembered His dead people of Israel who lay in the graves; and He descended to preach to them His own salvation.'(13)

Irenaeus also cites these words accrediting them to both Isaiah and Jeremiah. *But they likewise are lacking in the Old Testament.*

In Psalm 96:10, these words occur in the authorized Version:

> 'Say among the heathen that the Lord reigneth.'

Justin the Martyr alleges that the genuine reading is 'Tell ye among the nations, the Lord *hath reigned from the wood*' and insists that the Jews cancelled these most significant words.(14) Here Trypho remarked, 'Whether or not the rulers of my people have erased any portion of the Scriptures, as you affirm, God knows; but it seems incredible.' Indeed, the incredulity of Trypho was fully warranted. 'From the wood' is not found in critical texts of either the Hebrew or the Greek. And when Justin in the same chapter repeats this entire ninety-sixth psalm for the benefit of his audience, he himself strangely enough omits these disputed words, 'from the wood'!

> 'There is no evidence that it [this reading] ever was in an ancient Hebrew text. *This false reading* also gained currency among Christians through its use in the hymn of Fortunatus, *vexilla regis prodeant*, used in the Latin church and translated by Neale for English use.'(15)

The perversion of the original meaning of Old Testament passages by the employment of allegory has been a continuous Christian affliction. This disease has ever been epidem-

ic in Christianity, and no cure is known. It exists in countless forms according to the whim of its employer. Those suffering from it become thoroughly dishonest interpreters of the Old Testament without knowing it. As nothing can be done about it, the historian retains his sanity only by taking strong doses of common sense and of humor.

Consider, for example, this specimen from Justin in which he proves that Psalm 22:15-18 contained the details of Golgotha.

> 'And the statement, "Thou hast brought me into the dust of death; for many dogs have surrounded me: the assembly of the wicked have beset me round. They pierced my hands and feet. They did tell all my bones. They did look and stare upon me. They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture,"—was a prediction of the death to which the synagogue of the wicked would condemn him, whom he calls both dogs and hunters, declaring that those who hunted him were both gathered together and assiduously striving to condemn him. And this is recorded to have happened in the memoirs of his apostles.'(16)

And here is a translation based upon the Hebrew:

> "I am laid low in the dust of death.
> For a pack of curs encircle me,
> a gang of villains surround me;
> my hands and feet are all disfigured,
> I can count all my bones,
> and my foes are gloating over me,
> dividing already my very clothes,
> and casting lots for my raiment"

To turn a scene portraying one beset by wild beasts and about to become their prey into a minute description of Jesus' death upon the cross only the allegorist would propose. But the Greek translation had already incorrectly rendered 'my hands and feet are all disfigured' by 'they pierced my hands and feet'. And the Vulgate, Syriac, and other versions copied the mistake.

Genesis contains a prediction regarding Simeon and Levi:

> 'Simeon and Levi are brethren;
> Weapons of violence are their swords.
> *O my soul*, come not thou into their council;
> Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou invited;
> For in their anger, they slew a man,
> And in their self-will, they hocked an ox.'

Tertullian, too orthodox to remain a Catholic, becoming a member of a fundamentalist millennarian group, used his imagination upon this perfectly plain statement. When he completed his interpretation, Simeon and Levi had been converted into the scribes and Pharisees; ox, into Christ; a man into men; the unmentioned men into prophets. 'For against him did they wreak their fury after they had slain his prophets, even by affixing him with nails to the cross. Otherwise, it is an idle thing when, after slaying men, he inveighs against them for the torture of a bullock.'(17) 'If we had some cheese we could make a sandwich if we had some bread.' Allegory enables any person anywhere to turn the Old Testament to his purpose but only by cancelling original significance and history.

6. *Predestined Calvary But Guilty Jews*

The Bible of the Poor was a Christian picture book in circulation toward the end of the fifteenth century. It contained one event from the gospel cycle accompanied by Old Testament prefigures on each page. The Old Testament counterpart of the Annunciation is the Serpent tempting Eve to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If Eve had not sinned, man could not have been saved.(18)

In a thirteenth century English poem, the author hurrahs for the fall of man:

Ne hadde the appil take' ben
the appil take' ben
Ne hadde never our lady
A ben hevene' quene.
Blessed be the time
That appil take' was
therefore, we moun singen
'Deo gracias' (19)

The primitive Christians demonstrated that Jesus was the Christ by an appeal to prophecy. They discovered every event of his life and especially of his passion predicted in the Old Testament. Only because he fulfilled these fore-tellings could Jesus be identified with the Messiah. But then it followed that God or the plan of God was responsible for the death of Jesus. Christian salvation is dependent upon the cross. Therefore the cross was an act of God. How then could the contemporaries of Jesus be blamed?

Justin's answer is that the Jews were, indeed, the predestined instruments of God, the Father caused the sufferings of Jesus, but they did not know they were doing the will of God:

> 'For although his Father caused him to suffer these things in behalf of the human family, yet you did not commit the deed as in obedience to the will of God. For you did not practice piety when you slew the prophets. And let none of you say: If his Father wished him to suffer this, in order that by his stripes the human race might be healed, we have done no wrong.'(20)

Irenaeus argues that the Jews fulfilled the purpose of God by their participation in the tragedy of Calvary, that they thereby saved the Christians from hell but also condemned themselves to hell:

> 'Christ had, indeed, to be sought after by the people in order to be slain; unless the Jews, then, had become the slayers of the Lord (*which thing did, indeed, take eternal life away from them*), and, by killing the apostles and persecuting the church, had fallen into an abyss of wrath, we could not have been saved.'(21)

This was Oedipean fate with a vengeance, worthy of a Sophocles but completely out of step with the Sermon on the Mount. With theology like this, ghetto and inquisition and pogrom are near at hand. Fortunately not all Christian theologians held with Irenaeus. Judaism has wondered why God made a Christian scape-goat out of Israel.

7. *Inventing Jewish Atrocities*

The invention of atrocities is easy when peoples hate each other. After Christianity and Judaism had become permanently estranged, Christian vindictiveness fastened atrocities committed upon Jesus by brutal Roman soldiers upon the

Jews. They scourged the Nazarene and clothed him in purple and placed a crown of thorns on his head and smote him and crucified him. Every sordid attitude and deed were transferred to them.

Recent translators of the New Testament render John 19: 13, 'When Pilate, therefore, heard these words, he brought Jesus out, and placed him on the judgment-seat at a place called The Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha.' This revised translation demands a repainting of the ordinary Christian portrait of Pilate. It shows that Pilate was toying with the Nazarene throughout the trial. This was a final act of humiliation, a mutilated king upon the judgment seat! Pilate was suggesting rejection of an impostor. Observe the turn given to this verse in the Apology of Justin the Martyr:

> 'And as the prophet spoke, they [that is, the Jews] tormented him and set him on the judgment seat.'(22)

Tertullian concludes his *Shows* with a lurid picture of the final assize. Christ has come to judgment. Before the throne of judgment are the world's chief sinners awaiting their penalty—monarchs, philosophers, poets, tragedians, actors, charioteers, wrestlers. He is enjoying the sight as he beholds the various tortures approaching. Then, this:

> 'unless even then I shall not care to attend to such ministers of sin in my eager wish rather to fix a gaze insatiable on those whose fury vented itself against the Lord. "This," I shall say, "this is that carpenter's or hireling's son, that Sabbath-breaker, that Samaritan and devil possessed! This is He whom you purchased from Judas! This is He whom you struck with reed and fist, whom you contemp-

> tuously spat upon, to whom you gave gall and vinegar to drink! This is He whom His disciples secretly stole away, that it might be said He had risen again, or the gardener abstracted, that his lettuces might come to no harm from the crowds of visitants''.'(23)

8. *Canonizing Roman Atrocities as Jewish*

In the last year of the eleventh century a Syrian Christian informed a western priest that the *Gospel of Peter* had predicted the first crusade. As late as the eleventh century, then, some Christians held this gospel in high regard. In the eighth century it was still in circulation. Theodoret supplies the information that it was used by Jewish Christians living in Syria in the fifth century. In the time of Serapion, bishop of Antioch, the *Gospel of Peter* was used in public worship by the church at Rhossus and was canonical for some. This gospel is dated about 130-150. A fragment was discovered in an Egyptian tomb late in the nineteenth century. It contains the narrative of the passion from the trial before the Roman procurator to the resurrection.

The climax in the Christian reinterpretation of the trial scene is probably reached here. It canonized Roman atrocities as Jewish and lets the inscription upon the cross originate with the Jews.

> 'And they [the Jews] took the Lord and pushed him, as they ran, and said, Let us drag away the Son of God, having obtained power over him. And they clothed him with purple, and set him on the seat of judgment, saying, Judge righteously, O King of Israel. And one of them brought a crown of thorns and placed it on the head of the Lord.

> And others stood and spat in his eyes, and others smote his cheeks: others pricked him with a reed; and some scourged him, saying, With this honor let us honor the Son of God. . . . And when they had raised the cross they wrote upon it, this is the King of Israel. . . . And they, being angered at him, commanded that his legs should not be broken, that he might die in torment . . . And one of them said, Give him to drink gall with vinegar. And they mixed and gave him to drink and fulfilled all things and accomplished their sins against their own head . . . and many went around with lamps, supposing that it was night, and fell down. And the Lord cried out, saying, My power, my power thou hast forsaken me . . . And then they drew out the nails from the hands of the Lord, and laid him upon the earth . . . and the Jews rejoiced.' (24)

9. *Tampering with the Sources*

At this point the reader should turn to sections 4 and 5 of the third chapter to refresh his memory on the various gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus. The verdicts there reached were based upon the critical texts of the gospels as accepted by most scholars. According to these, Pontius Pilate delivered Jesus to his soldiers for crucifixion.

But several Greek codices and the Sinaitic Syriac contain important textual differences. In the narrative of the ascent to Jerusalem where the Greek Matthew and Mark read 'and they [the chief priests and the scribes] shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him *unto the Gentiles to mock and to scourge and to crucify*', the Sinaitic Syraic has '*deliver him unto the people*'. In Matthew 27:26f where the Greek

reads, 'Then released he [Pilate] unto them Barabbas: but Jesus he scourged and *delivered to be crucified*', the Sinaitic Syriac has '*delivered him to them to be crucified*'. On the basis of the Greek manuscripts and because the Jews neither scourged nor crucified, the text of the Sinaitic Syriac manuscript seems to represent a corruption of the sources.

Similar Christian tampering with the text of the Old Testament has already been noticed. Christian interpretation of the text of Josephus has long been acknowledged. For Josephus could not remain a Jew after asserting that Jesus was the Messiah, performed miracles, had been predicted in the Old Testament, and had risen from the dead on the third day. Moreover, the Slavonic 'additions' to the *Jewish War* of Josephus contain obvious Christian interpolations of which the following would seem to be one:

> 'And he [Pilate] let him [Jesus] go; for he had healed his dying wife. And he went to his wonted place and did his wonted works. And when more people again assembled round him, he glorified himself through his actions more than all. The teachers of the Law were overcome with envy and gave thirty talents to Pilate, in order that he should put him to death. And he took it and gave them liberty to execute their will themselves.'(25)

10. *Ghetto*

Christians have persecuted the Jews furtively and insidiously as well as openly and brazenly, in many petty ways and in four institutions—the ghetto, the inquisition, holy cross day, and the pogrom. The accusation of ritual murder is first met with in the 'dumbest of the centuries' and was easily shown to be groundless by the investigation of the Ger-

man emperor Frederick II. The charge of defaming hosts (the wafer of the eucharist) caused crusades against the Jews of southern Germany while that of poisoning wells, appearing for the first time in France in the fourteenth century, was attended to by mob action. The complete social separation of Jew and Christian was accomplished under ecclesiastical auspices.

For self-protection Jews attempted to remain together and hence in a voluntary way established Jewish sections in many medieval towns. A certain degree of isolation aided them in observing their religious rites and customs. Feudal lawlessness necessitated banding together for common defense. The voluntary ghetto was a fortress against attack.

Later the ghetto became compulsory, 'a barrier against escape'. It was the legal residence of the Jew, separated from the rest of the town by ditch, hedge or wall. The settlement at Frankfort was enclosed by a wall thirty feet high. At sunset the Jew had to retire to the ghetto; its gates were locked and guarded by watchmen. Fines and imprisonment were penalties for not heeding the curfew bell. The wearing of a Jewish badge introduced by the Lateran Council of 1215 further humiliated the Jew and made him conspicuous. On Sundays and more prolonged Christian holidays the Jew had to remain within the ghetto both for his own protection and because of the heavy fines imposed upon those who ventured beyond its precincts. An increase of the excise on beer might provoke a massacre of the Jews. The town's houses of prostitution were sometimes located in the Jewish section. When a medieval gang desired to take a Jew for a ride, it knew where to find him. Herding of Jews in the ghetto made it easier to compel attendance upon conversional preaching missions. Since horizontal expansion

was impossible in the ghetto, the Jew originated vertical expansion which meant constant dread of fire in buildings so high and not at all fire-proof. Occasionally the Jews would be banished from their ghetto through fires set by Christians only to return to the charred ruins to begin life anew in gloom and filth.

Ghetto comes from *getto*, the 'old, walled iron-foundry' in the city of Venice where the compulsory ghetto was established in 1516. The fanatical and reactionary Pope Paul IV founded the Roman ghetto which existed in all its squalor until the Eternal City became the capital of modern Italy. What life in this ghetto was like, Abbott has delineated in a terrific indictment of Christianity:

> 'Thus the children of Israel dwelt apart in these narrow quarters, multiplying fast, while the space allotted to them remained the same; herded together, many families in the same house, often in the same room; and breathing the air of what, under the circumstances, rapidly developed into veritable slums. The world beyond gradually outgrew medieval conditions of life; the streets became straight, broad and airy; light penetrated into courts which the overhanging upper stories once doomed to perpetual darkness; but the ghetto knew none of these blessings . . . Confinement initiated degradation; the fatal gift of fecundity, cultivated as a religious duty, promoted it, and soon the Roman ghetto became a by-word for its filth and misery. At one time as many as ten thousand souls swarmed in a space less than a square kilometer. To the curse of overpopulation was

> added the yearly overflow of the Tiber, which transformed the narrow, crooked lanes into marshy alleys, filled the basements with pestiferous mud, and turned the whole quarter into a dismal abode of prematurely aged men, of stunted, elderly children, and of repulsive wrecks of womanhood.'(26)

The ghetto made the Jew more and more self-conscious and group-conscious and increased his separation from the world. It turned the outsider into an enemy whose 'impurity was to be shunned, whose cruelty was to be feared, whose rapacity was to be baffled by cunning.'(27)

II. *The Inquisition*

In 385 the first Christian heretic went to his death. Augustine urged the use of force against the dissenter, but as late as the ninth century, Pope Nicholas I still held that torture was contrary to both divine and human law. Pope Innocent III declared that those who deserted the faith should be 'cut off from the Christian communion and stripped of their goods'. Torture of those suspected of heresy was sanctioned by Pope Innocent IV. Early in the fifteenth century, England began to burn heretics.

By the inquisition the church attempted to eradicate heresy, punish heretics and their supporters, and save their souls. The classes proceeded against included not only heretics but those suspected of heresy or those who aided heretics, blasphemers, persons opposing the holy office, and magicians, wizards, and witches. Any kind of evidence was competent against a heretic. Any one witnessing for the accused would be tried next. The instruments of torture were of every conceivable variety. Thumb-screws, Spanish

collars, ducking cages, iron boots, leg crushers, red-hot masks, pincers, spiders, the iron virgin, roasting, breaking on the wheel, barrels with spikes, stocks, pulleys, and many other amazing inventions were used in the inquisitorial third degree.

The Spanish inquisition was directed against Christians, Moors, and Jews. For a century Spain had been insisting upon the conversion or banishment of Jews. Under pressure some Jews had confessed themselves Christians. But the Spaniards were shortly convinced that the Marranos were not Christians at heart. They had been baptized but in secret they observed the rites and customs of their people. They had been driven underground. Hence in 1480, the inquisition proceeded against the Spanish church's Jewish converts. It had as its motto, 'Arise, O Lord, judge thine own cause; capture for us the foxes'. Thousands of Marranos were hunted, condemned and burned to death and their possessions confiscated after their inquisitors had questioned and tortured their trembling victims. Torquemada annually sent 6000 victims to the pyre or to 'reconciliation'. In 1481, according to the Jesuit historian Mariana, the 'net total amounted to two thousand burned alive, and seventeen thousand sentenced to loss of property, loss of civil rights, or incarceration'. 'Thus there was money for jewels —and for explorations'. 'Not jewels but Jews were the real financial basis of the first expedition of Columbus.'

In 1492, the Jews were banished from Spain. Hundreds of thousands took the lonely trail to nowhere having had only four months to settle all their affairs. Tens of thousands never reached a city of refuge. The best artisans, ablest traders, and most skilful physicians left Spain to promote civilization elsewhere. 'The Papacy found all these severi-

ties natural enough. If sometimes, it seems to have sought a quarrel with the all-powerful Spanish inquisition, this was not because the latter roasted or slaughtered too many unbelievers, but because it failed to show sufficient respect for the rights or financial interests of the church.'(28)

12. *The Pogrom*

Pogrom is a Russian word usually translated 'desolation', 'devastation'. It really means 'to batter down as with a thunderbolt, to destroy without pity', and originated in 1881.(29) It represents organized riot and pillage.

> 'All the outbreaks of anti-Jewish hatred, from 1881 to this day [1907] were organized by the police authorities in accordance with a well-matured plan known as *pogrom*. The procedure consists in deliberately inciting by word of mouth and printed proclamations the dregs of society against the classes or sects of the community obnoxious to the Government, and, then, when the work is done, suppressing the riot by the barbarous methods which are so typical of Russian administration.'(30)

The files of the American Jewish Year Book of the last one-half century contain page after page of summary of results of pogroms in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe.(31)

13. *Hitlerism*

At the present moment, the world is reluctantly witnessing another anti-Semitic crusade in Europe. The Hitler regime did not postpone its persecution of the Jew very long. One trembles at the thought of what may occur at any moment,

for the strength of the Hitler movement has been decidedly underestimated beyond Germany. Hitlerism symbolizes intense Germanism. The stakes again fought for are assumed to be German culture and nationalism. That anti-Semitism is its sentimental foundation seems clear from these planks in the Hitler platform:

> 'Only he can be a citizen who is one of the people.'
> 'No Jew can be one of the people.'
> 'He who is not a citizen shall live in Germany only as a guest, and is subject to our laws for aliens.'
> 'We demand that all non-Germans who have entered the country since August 2, 1914, be compelled to quit Germany.'

As a matter of fact, less than one percent of the population of Germany is Jewish. The Jewish immigration from Russia and Poland since 1914 constitutes less than two-tenths of one percent of that population. More than seventy percent of the Jews in Germany are *bona fide* old German citizens. In some instances Jewish families in Germany date their lineage hundreds of years back. Why should German Jews of long standing, culture and economic consequence be ostracized for the feeling against the few?

Does the usual explanation of Hitlerite anti-Semitism as due to racial and economic reasons suffice? The so-called pure German stock of Eastern Germany is regarded as sixty percent Slavic and that of Southern Germany as forty percent Celtic. The myth of the pure Nordic has been much overworked.

If the immigrant Russian or Polish Jew is the object of their reprisals, why are distinguished German-Jewish jurists removed from office, Jewish shops boycotted or plund-

ered, Jewish emigration interfered with if not forbidden? The removal of Jews from medical, legal, artistic, and scientific positions does not seem to be directly connected with the immigrant situation.

Attitude and atmosphere always actually account for any immediate agitation and action. When dormant religious bitterness and hatred and bigotry are summoned to resurrection and reassertion of themselves, they joyously accept the invitation. The twentieth century is only a few paces ahead of medieval religious prejudice. There is no more conservative and reactionary force than religion. Hitlerism's *Hinterland* dates from C.E. 1900.

At the turn of the century, Houston Stewart Chamberlain published a two volume work upon *The Foundations of the Nineteenth Century*. The German edition enjoyed a very extensive sale. Ten years later an English translation appeared which was reprinted five times within four years. Pretending to protest that the Jew is not an enemy of Teutonic civilization and culture and should not be made the general scape-goat for all the vices of modern life, Chamberlain nevertheless conducted a grand offensive against the Old Testament and the Jewish origin of Christianity, peddling all the old superstitions and tales against the Jews selected from footnotes of ancient tomes. Little that might damage the modern Jew escaped the author's keen eye. The tone was so innocent and so objective, but so ironical and so cruel as well. Only *morally* was Jesus a Jew. The Jew was described as intolerant, proud, materialistic, and alien. If Jesus had preached to the Indian or Germanic peoples, he would have been understood! The great error of Christianity was that it chose Judaism as its foundation, that the backbone and the skeleton of the primitive church were

borrowed from Israel. The political and social significance of the Jew was described as pernicious. Fortunately, Christianity escaped the devastating influence of Judaism somewhat by getting rid of Semitic monotheism and becoming trinitarian. The myth of the peculiar aptitude of the Jew for religion especially irritated Chamberlain, and he exhorted the Teutons no longer to trail behind the ark of the covenant but independently to display their native genius in religion. Aryan religious emphases, he concluded, were the need of the twentieth century.

At the end of the World War, General Ludendorff had some explaining to do. Naturally, Germany's defeat could not have resulted from his military and political blunders. Hence the German failure was blamed upon Judaism, the Jesuits, and the Free Masons. Mathilde Ludendorff now proceeded to trace the great sayings of the Old Testament and of Jesus to India and Buddhism. Others derived all worthy statements in the Old Testament from Egypt, Babylonia, Persia or a mysterious otherwise unknown Aryan religion current in Syria. Anything that seemed related to Judaism must be opposed.

Thereupon, attention was centered upon the abolition of the Old Testament. Those agitating for the suppression of the Old Testament insisted that it was a book written by Jews for Jews and continuing the myth of Israel as the 'chosen people'. They went on to argue that Israel is the 'rejected nation'; that the God of the Old Testament is not the God of Christianity; that the ethnic God of the Jews symbolizes the profit-motive; that the religious ideals of Israel are not commensurate with those of the Aryan peoples; and that the ethical deficiencies of the Old Testament are glaring. Apparently, they failed to notice that the set-

ting aside of the Old Testament involved an assault upon the New Testament. One cannot cancel Abraham without discrediting Paul. Martin Luther's emphatic endorsement of the Old Testament was rejected in modern Germany.

Twenty-one ministers, meeting in Altona, Germany, recently, issued a clerical manifesto in which the 'dream of an earthly kingdom of peace and righteousness and general welfare for all' was anathematized. Since the inauguration of the kingdom of God must await the coming down of the new Jerusalem out of heaven, silent consent and indirect assistance were here rendered to reactionary tendencies. Occasionally doctors of divinity are encountered 'unalterably opposed even to allowing Jews to become Christians'. The Protestantism of Germany has come under the spell of Chamberlainism and Hitlerism, while Catholicism no longer continues its opposition against its victorious foe. The logical outcome of all this should be the 'tuning' of the pulpits of the evangelical churches, represented in such resolutions as the following:

'God has created me a German.'

'Teutonism is a gift from God.'

'God desires that I fight for my Germanism.'

'War service is in no case a ravishing of the Christian conscience, but is obedience to God.'

'*The faithful have the right of revolution against a church official who does not recognize the national uprising and that unreservedly.*'

'The goal of the religious movement of the "German Christians" is an Evangelical Federal Church.'

'*The State under Adolf Hitler calls to the Church and the Church must heed the call.*'

Thus, the religious reason is interwoven with the political, racial, and economic threads of the Hitler pattern, and another scene in the Christian-Jewish tragedy is enacted upon the stage of life.(32)

CHAPTER IX

The Exploitation of Calvary

Christian drama, painting, architecture, sculpture, ritual, hymnology, education seek to interpret Calvary. The cross occupies a central place in the Christian scheme. But in explaining it, emphasis may be laid upon its minor characteristics while the glory of the achievement of Jesus is dimmed. Inaccuracies and side issues may become more important in its theology than what it is all about. What occurred centuries after the cross has too often been associated with the first passion week.

1. *Through the Centuries*

The medieval passion play grew out of the liturgy of early Easter morning. Beginning as a cantata, it became a drama as the various episodes of Easter day were added. Repartee with anti-Christ, the draped cross in the holy grave beside the altar, and a description of the dissolute life of Mary Magdalene coarsened it.

In the thirteenth century, the passion play left the protection of the church and two centuries later was secularized and popularized to satisfy the tastes of the villager and peasant. Latin went and the vernacular with all its colloquialisms was used. But this secularized drama was reputed to have sacramental significance. It expiated sin. The 'Passion' was expanded to include passion week, and then, man's story from Adam and Eve to the final judgment. In-

nocent events in the history of Israel were made the precursors of experiences of Jesus.(1)

The most serious thing was the use of all this against the Jews. Ridicule, satire, irony, and burlesque were pointed against them. A hideous crucifixion scene involved them immediately so that the Jew preferred confinement in the ghetto to the heroism of being found without it during the performance of a passion play. The passion of Christ was represented as arranged in hell by the devil and the Jews.

By the eighteenth century the passion play had become such a mixture of the sacred with the profane, such raw burlesque, and its actors were so given to intemperance and debauchery while still in costume as to invite the criticism and ridicule of liberals.

The Oberammergau passion play survived governmental suppression only on the pledge of revision and reformation. It has been undergoing censorship for two centuries. The text of 1662 and the text of 1930 are strangers. In 1750, it was reconstructed in the spirit of the baroque. Three decades later Father Magnus Knipfelberger took it in hand. Early in the nineteenth century Father Ottmar Weiss entirely rewrote it. Later Father Daissenberger removed still more of its color. The medieval Catholic text has been transformed into a Protestant, almost biblical, text with much of the ecclesiastical and traditional missing. Veronica and her handkerchief still remain. Even the music was modified. The coarse humor and brutal emotions characteristic of the seventeenth century play have been levelled down to more dignified dialogue.

Folk quality, the devil and his angels belaboring Judas, the temple stage of heaven and earth and hell, a Judas who died in full sight of the audience and was carried off the

stage by evil spirits after playing the part of a comic villain, testing each piece of silver by biting it, thereupon climbing a tree, shrieking and hanging himself—all these almost blasphemous elements are gone.(2)

And yet at present the Sanhedrin is overplayed; Pilate is too noble, superior, dignified, and grave; Judas with his red beard and yellow robe provoke criticism.

Consider also Christian art and liturgy. In the day of Paul, Ephesus was the warden of the temple of the great Artemis and of her statue fallen from heaven. Five centuries later Christianity was in possession of similar magical pictures of Christ! These achiropoiites included a portrait of Jesus still in existence which the messenger of King Abgar is alleged to have painted, the Cappadocian portrait brought to Constantinople in 574 and employed as a palladium in the wars with the Persians until 622, and the Palestinian portrait, an impression of Christ at the Jerusalem torture post.

In the West, Luke was made a painter and the picture of the Savior in the chapel over the *scala sancta* was assigned to him. Nicodemus had carved the *Volto Santo* in Lucca! After the fourteenth century, impressions of the body of Christ from his shroud were available.

The Christ-portrait is a creation of folk-phantasy and appears in many forms. When Isaiah 53 was applied to Jesus, he could not be represented as beautiful. Celsus employed the alleged ugliness of Jesus as an argument against his divinity. Origen, Chrysostom, and Jerome took Psalm 45 as point of departure and thought of Jesus as a lovely, majestic form. John 1:14 also contributed to this aspect of the picture.

The Gothic concentrated upon the suffering Christ. The great masters of the Italian renaissance avoided the cruci-

fixion. It was in the period of the baroque, symbol of the Catholic reaction to the Reformation and of absolutism, transmitter of ecclesiastical tradition, that the crucifixion was made physiological, bizarre, and horrible. No painting of the cross thus far produced at all corresponds to history.

Christian hymnology on the whole has rather escaped the vindictiveness of systematic theology.(3)

2. *Old Style Religious Education*

Unfortunately Christian religious education, whether of the old or new variety, teaches children many errors regarding Friday of Passion Week.

A Bible manual in widespread use in the United States contains these statements:

> 'When Cain heard this sentence of God, he gave way to despair, saying: "My sin is too great to be pardoned." So God set a mark upon him, and he went forth, a wanderer and fugitive upon the face of the earth.'
>
> 'The murdered Abel is a figure of Jesus Christ, while Cain is a figure of the traitor Judas, and the Jewish people, who put our Savior to death.'
>
> 'This history of the Jews is similar to what happened in the time of Jesus Christ. The Jews would not understand the spiritual kingdom promised by Christ, hence they rejected Him. On the cross He begged His Father to forgive them; but, as a punishment for their sin in having rejected Him, they are today wanderers on the earth, and will be to the end of time.'
>
> 'Saul was a figure of the Jewish Church. Chosen by God, at first she surpassed all others in her knowl-

edge of God and the graces with which she was endowed. But, little by little, she fell. She forgot her obedience, her humility, her charity, and, in the pride of her insolence, trusted alone in her sacrifices. She also rejected the Christian Church, chosen to succeed her. Saul persecuted David; so did the Jews persecute Jesus Christ.'

'As David had to contend against two enemies, Saul and Absalom, so have two enemies risen against Christ and His Church—the first, Judaism, which the Church replaced; the second, heresy....'

'For eighteen hundred years has the blood of Christ been upon the Jews. Driven from Judea—without country, without home — strangers amongst strangers—hated, yet feared—have they wandered from nation to nation, bearing with them the visible signs of God's curse. Like Cain, marked with a mysterious sign, they shall continue to wander till the end of the world.'

'The Jews have a dreadful account to give to God: they persecuted the prophets, they crucified the Savior, they put to death the apostles.'

'Christ came to call the Jews, but they threw away their vocation with the same indifference that Esau had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage.'

At the end of each chapter, questions are added. These sometimes emphasize the sins of the Jews.

In a story of Jesus, published in 1896, the authoress lets Pilate say:

'I would that Caesar would give these accursed people liberty to put the breakers of their law to death themselves. It was an empty form to bring

> the man to me, and it maddens me to be made the mere tool of their malice. . . . It was all false. The court was false, the trial was false; the accusation of sedition was false, and they knew that I knew it to be. Falsest of all was the hypocritical cry: "We have no king but Caesar!" It sickened me; so did their contemptible sanctity. They were full of murder and hatred, but too holy to enter my judgment hall.'

A popular *Life of Christ*, published in 1923, contains many denunciations of Judaism, among them the following:

> 'What a pity that the Romans do not allow our old punishment for blasphemers, for it would have relieved us to have stoned Thee one by one. Thus everyone would have had his share of pleasure, taking aim at the head with well-directed stones and covering Thee with bruises, clothing Thee in a tunic of stones. Once before when the adulteress was brought before Thee we put down our stones, but today no one would be backward, and Thou wouldst have paid for Thee and her! The cross is well enough, but how much less satisfying for the spectators.'

Another *Life of Christ*, fully illustrated, contains this bit of Christian passion:

> 'Wherever a Jew has been found, whether quietly pursuing his calling in the market-place of civilization, or fleeing from its persecution, the blood-guiltiness of the Jewish fathers has been remembered in their children. A prejudice has grown in

the hearts of men who have not known anything personally against the Jews, who have not been even personally acquainted with them, a prejudice which cannot be charged to the account of those in whom the inherent feeling exists without reference to the blood that was shed. The cry of the infuriated Jews has reverberated down the corridors of the ages, and even men who have heard only the rudiments of their story shrink from contact with the haunted race. Time has not wiped out their deed, nor has history erased it. On the darkest pages of the annals of mankind, it remains as if it had been recorded in letters of blood for all men to read for ever. It accelerated the doom then fast approaching of the people compelled by their own act to tread a bloodstained road, a people afterwards bereft of their country, yet preserved amidst all nations in a way unparalleled, ever moving with restless footsteps in the world of men conspicuous by the mark upon them that stained their name.

'Until the world can discover a deeper meaning in it all, prejudice will veil the secret lesson in the history of the Jew (Cf. Hebrews 9:11-28; Exodus 24:8).'

5. *New Style Religious Education*

During the last quarter century a new style of religious education has been in vogue. It makes its way but slowly against denominational publishing societies. A recent study of 1000 children nine and ten years of age showed the presence of bitter and intolerant ideas regarding other religions. (4)

An examination of much used Sunday School lessons and Week-Day Lessons and even an occasional text-book of Public Education compels the admission that a considerable amount of prejudice against the Jew is conveyed by them to the child mind.

From a course on *The Life of Christ* designed for the sixth grade:

> 'This inscription [the king of the Jews] was unquestionably intended by Pilate as a revenge on the haughty and implacable priests for their momentary triumph over him, and in derision of their present impotence. That a crucified malefactor should be so inscribed they took as a deadly insult. It is difficult to think of Pilate as not providentially guided in proclaiming a truth so profoundly significant.'

From a *Life of Christ* published for youth in 1909:

> 'Must I tell you what the leaders of his nation did that black night?
>
> 'As he stood helpless with manacled hands, they spat in his face, they drew a cloak over his head, and then struck him in the face, yelling, "ah! Now play the prophet. Tell us who struck you then." And they even encouraged the brutal soldiers to beat him with their fists and staves.
>
> 'Finally tired out with their abuse, they went home to their breakfast . . .'

From a manual for teachers of children from ten to twelve years of age:

> 'Make clear the illegality and unfairness of the Jewish trial, as showing not only the entire inno-

> cence of Jesus, but the lengths to which prejudice and wrong-doing will carry men when once they give themselves up to it. . . . Make it clear also that Jesus' death was the inevitable and necessary outcome of such a life as his, lived persistently to the end, at such a time as that in which he lived. He could not fulfill his mission for us and for all men and evade this end. . . . '

In a recent *Life of Christ*, one of the topics suggested for discussion is: 'Does the execution of Jesus justify modern anti-Semitism?'

Are the Christian boys and girls who taunt innocent Jewish children with being 'Christ-killers' more guilty than their elders who permit them to study it in Schools of Religion?

A book designed for use during the week contains the following:

> 'The "trial" of Jesus before the priests was a farce. He was allowed no witnesses. There was no jury. The time was dead of night. The "trial" followed immediately after his arrest. He was condemned within a few minutes of the first hearing of the charge. . . . In their folly they undertook to put to death the Prince of Life, as one of the apostles afterward said, and while unjustly condemning Jesus they were also condemning themselves. Instead of saving themselves and their city, their wealth, and their privileges, they only brought on destruction the more swiftly. Forty years after Jesus' death Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple sacked, and its golden treasures carried off to Rome. The judgment came, and the Kingdom of God. They

had their share in the one, but not in the other. And to this day the world remembers the condemnation of Jesus as its darkest hour of oppression.'

From another week-day religious school text:

'Growing angrier than ever at Jesus, the high priest pressed him with further questions: "Tell us, are you the Christ, the Son of God?"
'And Jesus answered: "That is what you have said."
'That made the high priest furious. He stalked up and down and tore his clothes and beat the air with his hands . . .
'Great numbers of people made up the procession to Calvary, as Golgotha is known—heartless, cruel, bloodthirsty murderers . . . '

One wonders to what lengths an enthusiastic and dramatic teacher might go in commenting orally upon such suggestive sentences!

A popular story of America used extensively as a text-book in history contains this sentence apparently accepting as authentic the Sinaitic-Syriac reading:

'But when he began to be well known, certain leading men among the Jews grew jealous, and persuaded the Roman governor to let them crucify him.'

These excerpts by no means exhaust the instances occurring in the more historically-minded religious educational text-books implying prejudice against Judaism. Fundamentalist pronouncements have been avoided lest the series of citations never end.(5)

PART THREE

Saint Pilate Loses His Halo

Chapter X: *Then the Dawn Came*

The process by which the brutal judge and executioner of Jesus, Pontius Pilate, was converted into a Christian and a Christian saint first received study.

Thereupon its accompaniments were noted in the general attitude of intolerance on the part of the Christian toward the Jew, in the unparalleled atrocities committed by Christianity against Judaism in spite of its permanent indebtedness to the mother religion, and in unfair modern interpretations of the passion story.

Historical criticism has revised the traditional analysis of the passion narrative. The gospels themselves are subject to critical reconstruction. Hence, any book quoting them at random may be in grievous error. In this part, then, the heart of the problem is reached.

The medieval Christian interpretation of Judaism disintegrated under the action of the forces which produced the modern age. The rise of the modern state and of national churches undermined the one empire and one church of medieval political theory. The international church found vigorous life difficult under demanding nationalism. It could

no longer enforce its decrees. Social, political, and economic upheaval brought on by the collapse of the inherited system of industry, the growth of cities, the Black Death, the constant wars of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the widening areas of commerce, the accumulation of capital, the frequent insurrections of the peasants led to religious readjustments which alleviated the lot of the Jew. The introduction of the historical method and of printing resulted in new points of view. Humanism fertilized the medieval intellect, contributed open-mindedness, broke the sway of scholasticism, instructed men in the art of fighting for their higher interests, formed the party of progress at the universities, provided the historical data so essential to victory in the struggle with the authority of the medieval church, promoted a new attitude toward the Bible, insured sanity, poise, balance, and common sense and greatly reduced the tendency toward fanaticism.(1)

Out of the shaping forces of the modern age came the dawn of a new day for Judaism.

1. *The Discovery of America*

The discovery of America turned the immense pancake earth of European Christian theology into a tiny baseball turning around upon itself as well as around a central sun. The new earth revealed tribes at every level of progress completely unfamiliar with the laws and traditions of Europe. Territory greater than all Europe had been added to the earth's surface. Here were persons who had never heard of Palestine, the popes, or Aquinas and did not care about Nicaea and Chalcedon. A new geography and new astronomy meant a new theology and a new political theory. To believe in a moving earth signified theological nausea.

Judaism contributed to the discovery of America through map-making, its confiscated wealth, attendance upon the historic expedition of Columbus, and exploration of the hinterland. When the aborigines of America were identified with the Jews, a new interest in the ten lost tribes was awakened.

After the exploration of the Americas was actively entered upon, the Spaniards and Portuguese had other matters than Jew-baiting to engage their attention. Moreover, America was used as a penal colony for the insane, criminals and Jewish children. But surveillance in the vast new lands was not as easy or as rigid as in Europe. The inquisition in the new world taught Jewish mothers to 'chant Hebrew prayers to the click of the rosary'. Commercial and political rivalry between the Catholic and Protestant nations helped Judaism. Holland knew how to employ the Marranos in her war with Portugal, while Hugo Grotius boldly advocated and obtained religious liberty for the Dutch Jews. America might be a dumping ground for Jews but it was also a city of refuge.

Cromwell permitted Jews to settle again in England. When the British colonies won out against Spain and France in North America, Jews found homes there as well as in the mother country. In these colonies a twofold struggle was on, one involving the compact theory of government resulting in democracy, the other concerned with religious liberty as a fundamental right of every human being. In two tracts, entitled *The Bloody Tenent of Persecution* and *The Bloody Tenent Yet More Bloody*, Roger Williams rejected the divine right theory of the state, proposed separation of church and state, and made a courageous plea in behalf of the Jew.

A century and one-half of suffering and discussion and the successful prosecution of a war against England preceded the incorporation of his principles in the sixth article of the Constitution of the United States and the First Amendment thereto. Yet it held *for the nation* in 1789 that

> 'no religous test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States,' and
>
> 'Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.'

Only the federal government had proclaimed its neutrality in regard to religious issues. The several commonwealths still had restrictive religious legislation in their constitutions and some states have it to this day. Yet in the United States the principle that religious liberty is a fundamental human right has conquered. Here Christian, extra-Christian, anti-Christian, theist, agnostic, atheist, Catholic, Calvinist, Jew, Mohammedan, Hindu, Confucianist, Bahaist have the same religious rights before the law. In the long run it has been impossible to deprive the Jews of the United States of their religious rights and privileges.(2)

2. *Protestantism*

Far more radical ideas than those of Luther and Calvin appear in the pre-Reformation age. The founders of Protestantism regarded themselves as in agreement with the Christianity of the church and did not anticipate separation. But as the Reformation 'wandered into wider and wider variation' and entered into intimate affiliation with the spirit of the modern age, its religious attitude proved more immediately susceptible to impressions from the rapid-

ly changing environment than did that of the more slowly evolving Roman Catholic church. Hence, Protestantism became to a greater extent than Roman Catholicism, the religious carrier of the germ of modernity.

Martin Luther in 1523 published a tract entitled *That Jesus Christ Was Born a Jew* in which he mercilessly criticized the medieval Christian treatment of the Jew. But when Judaism failed to embrace Lutheranism, the Wittenberg Colossus reversed himself in two tracts of 1543, *Regarding Shem Hamphoras* and *Concerning the Jews and their Lies*, recommending their persecution and suppression. Protestantism undertook missions to the Jews and engaged in bitter polemic against them. For example, Eisenmenger could in 1700 publish a scathing attack upon Judaism in his *Judaism Revealed*.

Yet with the Marranos, migrating to various countries of Europe and to North America, making their influence felt in behalf of religious liberty, with so many Jews extremely serviceable to developing Protestant capitalism, with Turkey tolerating Judaism, with the strength of Protestantism and Catholicism almost evenly divided at times, in the presence of so many varieties of non-conformity, amid the break-down of religious authoritarianism and the rise of individualism, the emancipation of Judaism was accelerated under Protestantism. For although Protestantism had inherited authoritarianism, it was founded upon personalism. From this tension and dilemma it cannot escape. When it insisted upon the freedom of the Christian man with reference to God, truth, his fellows, the state, and the Bible, it could not logically in the long run deny this freedom to others. The authority of an inerrant Bible has always in the end surrendered to the authority of the individual's experi-

ence of God. And so Protestantism in spite of its fundamentalism promoted religious toleration and liberty, intellectual emanicipation from church and dogma, quarreling denominationalism, and a new appreciation of religious experience. The nineteenth and twentieth centuries have been characterized by the formation of innumerable denominational bodies, the weakening of both creedal and biblical authority, the acceptance and extensive application of the scientific method, the comparative study of religion, the rediscovery of social Christianity, and an excessive emphasis upon religious education.

All this has been helpful to Judaism.(3)

3. *The Historical Method of Interpreting the Bible*

Modern Christianity has endorsed the historical method of interpreting its Holy Book. This new attitude is demanding a reconstruction of the events of passion week.

When Protestantism appealed to the Bible, it obligated itself to ascertain the history, the contents, and the purpose of the Bible. This denoted scrutiny of manuscripts, study of original environment, search for cause and effect and rationalization, and the relation of religious conditions to the total situation. Strata were soon uncovered, and the absolutism of the Bible vanished. Formerly the facts of history had been learned from the Bible; now they began to tell the Christian investigator what the Bible is. Christianity became an historical religion, originating at a specific time and within a definite philosophy of life. It lost much of its finality as it was compared with other religions of the Mediterranean world.

A few decades ago the results of the historical study of the Bible were concealed in footnotes of learned tomes or

in quotations in foreign languages. They were esoteric data of scholars. Today Sunday School leaflets, magazines, and college text-books regularly publish the latest conclusions of criticism. The laity, therefore, often know more about the Bible than the clergy.

Whereas, formerly the life of Jesus was taught on the basis of a harmony of the gospels, no historian would today attempt to reconstruct the actual succession and connection of all events in the career of Jesus. The original chronological sequence cannot be ascertained and therefore the psychological development of Jesus escapes the chart. Only a small fraction of the life of Jesus can be recovered from the scanty surviving data. On his last week more material is extant but since the primitive church was feverishly awaiting the demise of the world, selection of sayings of Jesus was conditioned by this thought and feeling pattern.

From the beginning, historical criticism has been a liberating force tending to emancipate its employer from the grosser prejudices and thereby has contributed to the emancipation of Judaism. Recently it has come to grips with all the variations in the gospel narratives involving the disputed points in the trial and crucifixion of Jesus and has completely reconstructed the participation of Judaism in the death of Jesus.(4)

4. *Lessing and Mendelssohn*

Medieval Europe could not absorb Judaism. Its closed system at its best tolerated Judaism and at its worst demanded its pound of flesh. When medieval solidarity at last yielded to the heavy blows of science and of individualism, Judaism was able to secure a place in the sun. A Christian and a Jew inaugurated the new era in Europe.

Through conflict with the moribund orthodoxy of his day, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing became a theological thinker, poet, and author. He founded a new Protestantism. Goeze and Reimarus had interpreted the truth of Christianity as a matter of the inspiration of the Bible, miracles, and revelation; Lessing discriminated between Bible and Christianity, between faith and history. For him accidental, historical facts could not demonstrate the necessary facts of reason. Therefore criticism of the Bible was no longer criticism of religion, for the Bible was not religion. Reason is not revelation. The writings and the canon of the New Testament originated historically and must be historically understood. Emancipation of the human spirit from dogma meant tolerance.

From the Jewish ghetto in Dessau, a weak, crippled, penniless Jewish boy made his way to Berlin and began to study German. Moses Mendelssohn became not only the popularizer of the Illumination but the guide of the new Judaism as well. By translating books of the Bible into German, he brought German Judaism into closer relationship with its environment. He was also instrumental in directing the Hebrew study of the Bible from its haggadic, philosophic, and mystical points of view to the recognition of simple historical significance. By his exposition of the meaning of Judaism, he introduced his day and generation to the historical position and character of Judaism. His *Phaedon* went through three editions in two years and was translated into English, French, Dutch, Italian, Danish, and Hebrew. His *Jerusalem* interpreted Judaism as a religion of reason, without dogmas but with 'revealed law'. He taught the world that 'it is by character, and not by controversy, that Jews can shame the bad opinion that may be held of them.'

In a friendship of three decades between Lessing and Mendelssohn, the new Protestantism and the new Judaism met, with beneficial results for each. Lessing's *Nathan the Wise* let the hero be a Jew and that Jew, Mendelssohn. Lessing had sketched a Jew from life and thus was criticizing Marlowe and Shakespeare. Here was a Jew opposed to class prejudice and in favor of a religious toleration including even the Mohammedan! The advice of the modest judge to quarreling Mohammedans, Christians, and Jews was:

'Therefore, let each one imitate this love;
So, free from prejudice, let each one aim
To emulate his brethren in the strife
To prove the virtues of the several rings,
By offices of kindness and of love,
And trust in God. And if, in years to come,
The virtues of the ring shall reappear
Amongst your children's children, then, once more
Come to this judgment seat. A greater far
Than I shall sit upon it, and decide!'

Thus Moses Mendelssohn, by winning a reputation as a mathematician and philosopher, writing in defense of Judaism, translating portions of the Bible into German, enlarging the horizon of his own people, and entering into an intimate friendship with Lessing, made it impossible any longer to ignore the German Jew. Kant had the doors of the University of Koenigsberg opened to the Jews and Philippson could found, in 1837, '*Die Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums.*'(5)

5. *The French Revolution*

In 1789, revolution awoke France. Soon all Europe heard its shibboleths of liberty, equality, and fraternity. In 1791

the Jews in France were emancipated and granted citizenship. France was the first 'among modern nations to give not only tolerance, but liberty, in its full social, legal, and political meaning, to her Jewish subjects.' Napoleon convened a modern Sanhedrin and confirmed the liberty of the Jew in France who became thereby 'a French citizen professing the Jewish religion.' In 1830 the government began paying salaries to the rabbis of the Jewish synagogues.

When Napoleon swept over the Alps in 1796, release from bondage for the Jews in Italy was at hand. In spite of reaction here and there and the birth of anti-Semitism about 1870, the nineteenth century witnessed widespread European acknowledgment of the rights of the Jew.(6) During and since the world war, the situation has not been as favorable.

6. *Modern Jewish Interpretations of Jesus*

Jewish scholarship responded to the historical study of the Bible by insisting that its consequences be accepted and also by revising its verdict upon Christianity in general and Jesus in particular. There is understanding among the critical historians of Judaism and Christianity.

It comes as a surprise to the average Christian to observe how very infrequently Christ is mentioned in the Jewish literature since his day. The Talmudic rabbis did not recognize the grandeur of Jesus. Jesus 'belonged to Christianity; and Judaism went its own way, caring nothing for Him or for the religion He founded.' *Toledoth Yeshu* was not 'representative of Jewish thought about Jesus. It represents the miserable revenge of the persecuted Jew of the baser sort' and hails from a later time.

In the sixth decade of the nineteenth century, I. M. Jost in his *History of Judaism* described Jesus as a saint and martyr of Nazareth. A few years later, Graetz in his *History of the Jews* attempted to do justice to the humanity of Jesus, expressing admiration and interpreting him as an Essene.(7)

These two investigations compelled even conservative Jewish writers to a better appreciation of Jesus. One who reads the articles upon Jesus and Christianity in the Jewish Encyclopedia notices constantly free and candid recognition of the nobility of the character of Jesus. In Montefiore's volume on the Synoptic gospels there is a 'whole-hearted admiration and even reverence for Jesus which is all the more striking because it is entirely free from theological convention. Judaism can scarcely get nearer to Jesus without ceasing to be Judaism.'

While the orthodox Paul Goodman judged that

> 'The most rational attitude of the Jews toward Jesus is a purely negative one. He is, of course, of exceeding import to them as a Jewish figure, who has shed a light over vast masses of his fellowmen, and the words ascribed to him are of much interest to Jewish theologians as showing how deeply he was rooted in the faith and ideas of his people, but there can be no place for Jesus in the religion of Israel',(8)

Joseph Jacobs in his beautiful *As Others Saw Him*, painted a portrait of Jesus which no Christian can afford to miss. Israel Abrahams declared Jesus' words 'Thy will, not mine' the 'supreme utterance of the Jewish consciousness on the subject of prayer.'(9)

Philippson in his *The Crucifixion and the Jews*, published three-quarters of a century ago, replying to the Christian

denunciations of Israel (as having either knowingly rejected its redeemer or murderously and treacherously put Jesus to death and therefore is either eternally damned or subject to hatred and malice) and recalling the slaughter of his people that their souls might be purified or that the descendants of the ancient culprits might make atonement for the guilt of Caiaphas, exhaustively examined the materials of the crucifixion story, concluding

> 'Thus, then, the result of our investigation is simply this: The trial and condemnation of Jesus by the Sanhedrin, and the demand for his death by the Jewish people, lack every historical authority. On the contrary, Jesus was arrested and executed as many other Messiahs who at that time presented themselves as such before the Jews by the Roman procurator, because the commotion stirred among the people by these pretenders appeared politically dangerous in the eyes of the Romans. That the information given to Pilate originated with the Jews, and that a Jew, and even a disciple of Jesus, lent himself for the special purpose of pointing him out, we will admit; and these very facts may be regarded as the real sum and substance of the whole picture of the scenes before the Sanhedrin and the judgment seat of Pilate. But an actual trial before the Sanhedrin never took place nor was there even a clamorous demand by the Jewish people for the execution of Jesus, so that the Jews cannot be regarded as the authors of the death of Jesus and be charged with it. As long as the commotion stirred up by Jesus was confined within the province of Galilee, no notice was tak-

en of it; but when he dared present himself even in Jerusalem as the Messiah, and this created a commotion among the people, which, happening under his own eyes, could not remain secret from the ever suspectful Pilate, the latter had the author of that commotion arrested . . . With this act the political side of the events turned up, and the Jews were the more compelled to disavow all connection with Jesus, as they had to fear the worst from Pilate. But Pilate sought indeed to implicate the Jews in the movements of Jesus as shown by his speeches and the inscription over the cross drafted by him, because he thereby hoped to gain a new weapon against them to be used in his defense against the accusations of cruelty pending against him before the court of Rome. Because the doctrine of Jesus was more of an ethical nature and partly beyond the comprehension of the people, the latter soon deserted Jesus, and Pilate could find no one besides Jesus to apprehend and punish. And this circumstance explains also the silence of Josephus. The event did not affect the people at large; only one individual suffered thereby.'(10)

Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch in his *The Crucifixion from a Jewish Standpoint* pointed out that

'the Roman procurator had Jesus arrested, and in accordance with Roman precedent and procedure, affixed to the cross. Typical Roman, as he was, he embittered the agony of his prisoner by jest and ribaldry, scoffing at his pretended royal dignity, and mocking with a crown of thorns his expec-

> tancy of the royal diadem. To the Romans the would-be Messiah was dangerous; to a majority of the Jews, his coming was the signal of joy. The Jews, be they Pharisees or Sadducees, had no motive for either betraying the Nazarene youth to the Romans, or pronouncing upon him the supreme penalty of the criminal code.'

Rabbi Hirsch further contended that the description of the triumphal entry in the gospels clearly indicates that Pilate heard of the messianic claims of Jesus and that Jesus' interference with the temple revenue of the Romans guaranteed intervention.(11)

Max Radin regards 'the account of the Passion in the Fourth Gospel as probably the deliberate invention of an imaginative writer. The references to eye witnesses and other sources would then be examples of established literary technique which pseudepigraphical works of the period frequently show.'(12)

No finer appreciation of Jesus by a Jew has been published than that by Rabbi Enelow in his *A Jewish View of Jesus:*

> 'Who can compute all that Jesus has meant to humanity? The love he has inspired, the solace he has given, the good he has engendered, the hope and the joy he has kindled—all that is unequalled in human history. Among the great and the good that the human race has produced, none has ever approached Jesus in the universality of appeal and sway. He has become the most fascinating figure in history. In him is combined what is best and most mysterious and most enchanting in Israel—the eternal people whose child he was. The Jew

cannot help glorying in what Jesus thus has meant to the world, nor can he help hoping that Jesus may yet serve as a bond of union between the Jew and the Christian, once his teaching is better known and the bane of misunderstanding at last is removed from his words and his ideal.'(13)

CHAPTER XI

The Separation of Christianity from Judaism

At present the separation of Christianity from Judaism can also be appraised historically. Long ago Jewish scholarship discerned that Christian and Jew reached the parting of the way during the Jewish wars against Rome.(1) Prior to C.E. 66, Jerusalem Jew and Christian lived in comparative peace. Since our gospels were written after the cleavage, they should naturally contain the new point of view. So Rabbi Enelow felt:

> 'Evidently the accounts [of the trials of Jesus] were written many years after the crucifixion. None of the writers had himself been present at the trials, at least not at the Jewish trial, though perhaps John (if he was the beloved disciple) was present at the crucifixion. What they wrote about the Jewish trial of Jesus—or the circumstances leading up to the crucifixion—was based on hearsay, opinion, and tradition. By the time they committed their accounts to writing, moreover, the church had already been founded, dogmas on the subject of the character and the fate of Jesus had been formulated, and many a controversy between the Jews and the founders of the new sect had taken place. The narration of the death of Jesus was no longer a mere question of history but of religious interpretation and argument.'(2)

Brilliant Adolf von Harnack in his *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity* reached a similar conclusion.(3)

1. *Jerusalem Jew and Christian to C.E. 66*

Christianity was at first Jerusalem-centered. In the beginning there were only Jewish Christians. And the closer companions of Jesus seem to have continued their residence in Jerusalem. At least it is said that when a persecution broke out against the Church in Jerusalem, in connection with the death of Stephen, 'everyone, *with the exception of the apostles*, was scattered over Judea and Samaria.'

The primitive Christian church entered upon no immediate conflict with the religion of the synagogue. The holy volume of Judaism, the Old Testament of Christianity, presented no problem. The Christian differed from the Jew only in identifying Jesus of Nazareth with the Messiah. Both believed in a Messiah; for the Christian, he had appeared; for the Jew, he had not. The Christian participated in the regular Jewish worship; observing the hours of prayer; continuing to offer the customary sacrifices. The gospels, though written about 70 C.E. and thereafter, still contain passages which assume a close connection between Jerusalem Christian and Jew:

> 'Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I came not to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily, I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least commandments and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.'(4)

'All things, therefore, whatsoever they [the scribes and the Pharisees] bid you, these do and observe.'(5)
'If thou wouldest enter into life, keep the commandments.'(6)
'If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.'(7)
'And day by day continuing stedfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart.'(8)
'And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people, and they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.'(9)
'And Peter and John were going up into the temple at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.'(10)

Even Stephen attended synagogues in Jerusalem.(11) The opponents referred to by the followers of Jesus in the earlier chapters of Acts are priests and Sadducees, while some Pharisees actually joined the church.(12) When Paul was arrested in Jerusalem in 58 of the Christian era, there was still a strong conservative party in the mother church of Christianity.

'And when we were come to Jerusalem, the brethren received us gladly. And the day following, Paul went in with us unto James; and all the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he rehearsed one by one the things which God had wrought among the Gentiles through his minis-

try. And they, when they heard it, glorified God; and they said unto him, *Thou seest, brother, how many thousands there are among the Jews of them that have believed; and they are all zealous for the law*'.(13)

When Christianity began to appeal to the Gentiles, and Gentile Christian churches were established, new problems arose for the Jewish Christians. Some held that a Gentile could not become a Christian without becoming a proselyte, submitting to the national rite; others like Peter and James were of a contrary opinion. The latter desiring to remain in communion both with their fellow-countrymen and Gentile Christians were confronted with a serious dilemma. They were misunderstood by Gentile Christians, Jewish Christians and Jews. They did not object to the presence of the Gentile Christian Titus as table-companion in Jerusalem, for there all food had been prepared according to Jewish scruples. An altogether different situation presented itself at Antioch because non-kosher food was upon the table. While Jewish Christian and Gentile Christian might eat together if the Jewish dietary regulations were being observed, could they if these regulations were being set aside?

The Judaistic Christians desired to convert all Christians to Judaism and all Jews to Christianity. The Peter-James group desired to convert all Jews to a conservative type of Christianity. Paul sought to convert Jews and Gentiles to a liberal Christianity. But as soon as conversion to Christianity signified the abandonment of Jewish customs and laws, it became apostasy. Paul was despising the law. Jerusalem Christians were ready to fraternize with Paul and his Gentile converts but were critical of his abandonment of the law. For he was accused of influencing even Jewish Christians to neglect the law. Indirectly Paul was causing the

disintegration of the diaspora and must be opposed.(14)

The earliest Christian records, then, reveal no break between Jerusalem Jew and Christian prior to C.E. 66.

2. *Josephus Says*

Josephus unwittingly bears witness to the sympathy of the Jerusalem Jews for the leader of the Christian church there. It was in 62 C.E., that leading citizens of Jerusalem openly protested the stoning of James at the instigation of the high priest Ananus. The passage will be examined at length in chapter XIII. (15)

3. *Graeco-Roman Testimony*

Not only do Christian documents and Josephus testify to the amity existing between the church at Jerusalem and Judaism up to the seventh decade of the first century, but the pagan philosopher Celsus in his vehement attack upon Christianity in his *True Word* ridicules the effort to exaggerate the differences between Jew and Christian. When Celsus published his polemic, Christianity was over a century old. Even then he contends that when Jew and Christian get down to fundamentals, their disagreements do not amount to much. (16)

4. *Judaism and Variation*

Judaism was tolerant of theological variation. A partial observance of the cultus sufficed. One's allegiance was not in question, if fundamentals were complied with. From the Rechabites to the Essenes, Jews had disagreed. Pharisee was at odds with Sadducee. Scribe and priest occasionally collided. Apocalyptist and legalist met in the same synagogue. Hillel and Shammai and their respective schools met

frequently in debate. It is said that 316 controversies between the schools of these famous rabbis can be tabulated. (17)

Weizsaecker has put it very concisely:

> 'The primitive Christians held fast to the faith and polity of their nation. They had no desire to be renegades, nor was it possible to regard them as such. Even if they did not maintain the whole cultus, this did not endanger their allegiance, for Judaism tolerated not merely great latitude in doctrinal views, but also a partial observance of the cultus—as is sufficiently proved by the contemporary case of the Essenes. The Christians did not lay themselves open to the charge of violating the law. They assumed no aggressive attitude.'

5. *The Gospel of Jesus and Judaism*

With much in the religion of Jesus, the most orthodox contemporary Jew could have agreed. There is a gospel of Jesus. There is also a gospel concerning Jesus. With the former, Christianity began. But religion focuses in personality. Hence there soon emerged a gospel concerning Jesus. That gospel has assumed many forms. The historical method of interpretation applied to Christian theology and the New Testament enables the student to work down through glacial drift and shale and limestone to more original strata. Once there he discovers that Jesus summarized religion in a combination of two passages quoted from the Jewish sacred book, namely, Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, in love of God and of man.

The gospel of Jesus assumed that there is love at the heart of the universe, that God is interested in man and cares,

that the human personality has infinite value, that we must be reverent toward all life, that men are brothers and must learn how to be brotherly, that life is interdependent and that the goal of living is to establish the cooperative commonwealth, to live together in peace under the sway of God. But the Jewish Bible contains many passages in perfect agreement with these emphases. Jesus' application of his principles to current practices naturally excited alarm precisely as modern Christianity rejects the appeal to the gospel of Jesus. (18)

6. *The New Testament and Calvary*

When the New Testament is consulted as to who were responsible for the death of Jesus and why Jesus died, the answer is not so simple.

Jesus himself did not relate his death to the forgiveness of sins. Luke 15 is Jesus' confession of faith. Here Jesus clearly teaches that sin is judgment. Man becomes sinful by an act of will. Man is a child of God and until he decides for God is in misery. When man approves of God and his way, his feeling of sonship is renewed. No one has been forgiven who does not do the will of God. Moreover, recent discussion of the origin of the Lord's Supper has demonstrated that the last meal of Jesus with his disciples was not a passover meal. (19)

Pilate is declared to have ordered the crucifixion on the charge of sedition at the instigation of the priests. But this, after all, was just the external reason for the cross. The cross was a voluntary choice on the part of Jesus. The death of Jesus was the result of a plan of God formulated at the beginning of the history of the world. Golgotha is related to the action of principalities and powers. Christian theology

refused to let God or Jesus be caught unawares. It rationalized Calvary into a cosmic essential.

That the crucifixion was a perfectly voluntary choice of Jesus is supported by the following gospel passages:

> 'Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place; all who draw the sword shall die by the sword. What! do you think I cannot appeal to my Father to furnish me at this moment with over twelve legions of angels?" '(20)
>
> 'This is why my Father loves me, because I lay down my life to take it up again. No one takes it from me, I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down and also power to take it up again. I have my Father's orders for this. I and my Father are one . . . ' (21)
>
> 'I will no longer talk much with you, for the Prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me; his coming will only serve to let the world see that I love the Father and that I am acting as the Father ordered. Rise, let us be going.' (22)

And many students of the life of Christ have been ready to emphasize this:

> 'Jesus' death was his own doing. No man took his life from him. He had "power to lay it down and power to take it again." He "loved me and gave himself up for me." There runs through the record the sure sense of victory. Jesus will rise from the dead. He will come again. The Lord's Supper is to be observed "till he come". ' (23)

But, according to other passages in the New Testament, the death of Jesus was predetermined by God:

'Jesus was betrayed in the predestined course of God's deliberate purpose.'(24)
'whom God put forward as the means of propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.'(25)
'Next day he observed Jesus coming towards him and exclaimed, "Look there is the lamb of God who is to remove the sin of the world!" '(26)
'Whereupon Jesus said to Peter, "Sheathe your sword. Am I not to drink the cup which the Father has handed me?" '(27)
'He said to them, "O foolish men, with hearts so slow to believe, after all the prophets have declared! Had not the Christ to suffer thus and so enter his glory?" Then he began with Moses and all the prophets and interpreted to them the passages referring to himself throughout the Scriptures.'(28)

Fundamentalism has always grasped the significance of this construction of the death of Jesus:

'The death of Jesus was not an unforeseen accident which spoiled all his plans. It was the very object for which He had come into the world. It took place in accordance with God's eternal purpose and with Christ's foreknowledge. He told his disciples of his approaching sufferings and voluntarily went forward to endure them. No man could take his life from him. He laid it down of himself. The multitudes who came out by night to seize him could not have done so had he been unwilling. But he permitted them to capture him and lead him away to trial and death, in order that he might suffer all that we deserved by our sins.'(29)

The New Testament also represents the death of Jesus as due to a duel between God and the evil forces ruling over the world. The principalities and powers and spirits caused Jesus to die.

> 'He partook of flesh and blood that through death he might conquer him that had the power of death, namely, the devil.'(30)
>
> 'He cancelled the regulations that stood against us—all these obligations he set aside when he nailed them to the cross, when he cut away the angelic Rulers and Powers from us, exposing them to all the world and triumphing over them in the cross.(31)
>
> 'Jesus Christ who is at God's right hand—for he went to heaven after angels, authorities, and powers celestial had been made subject to him.'(32)
>
> 'Join me in bearing suffering for the gospel by the power of the God who has saved us and called us to a life of consecration—not for anything we have done but because he chose to do it himself, by *the grace which he gave us ages ago in Christ Jesus* and has now revealed in the appearance of our Savior Jesus Christ, who has put down death and brought life and immortality to light by the gospel.'(33)
>
> 'He who commits sin belongs to the devil, for the devil is a sinner from the very beginning. This is why the Son of God appeared, to destroy the deeds of the devil.'(34)
>
> 'Now is this world to be judged; now the Prince of this world will be expelled.'(35)
>
> 'And when the Helper comes, he will convict the world, convincing men of sin, of righteousness,

and of judgment . . . because the Prince of this world has been judged.'(36)
'The Prince of this world is coming.'(37)

But if the death of Jesus was voluntary for him and predetermined by God and to settle a conflict between God and the devil and for sin, then at the most Judaism could be regarded as the agency through which all those benefits might come to humanity. Hence there was here possibility of peace between Jewish Christianity and Judaism.

7. *The Earliest Christology*

The earliest faith of the Christian church gave 'son of God' ethical-religious value. Whereas *theos* is used of God some 1300 times in the New Testament, it is used of Christ only a few times and these instances occur in the later strata of the New Testament. In letters written a quarter of a century after the death of Jesus, Paul very clearly discriminates between God and Christ and subordinates Christ to God. 'And when all things have been subjected unto him [Christ], then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him [God] that did subject all things unto him [Christ] in order *that God may be all in all*. . . . That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, *to the glory of God the Father*.'(38) These passages advertise Jewish monotheism. The fourth evangelist preserves the tradition that 'even his brothers did not believe in him [Jesus]'.(39) Mark records that the family of Jesus 'set out to get hold of him, for what they said was, "He is out of his mind".'(40) In the eschatological discourse, Jesus says, 'Now no one knows anything about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, not even the Son, but only the Father.'(41) The knowledge of

Jesus was limited. There is another passage which should be taken at its face value. 'As he [Jesus] went out on the road a man ran up and knelt down before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit life eternal?" Jesus said to him, "Why call me good? No one is good, no one but God".'(42) The subordination of Jesus to God appears throughout I Peter.(43) In the Epistle of James, God is clearly supreme. Prayer is addressed to God. God is one.(44) The humanity of Jesus is one of the chief interests of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.(45) There is no passage in the Johannine apocalypse where Christ is equated with *Theos*.

In all this there was little that the Jew need oppose.

8. *I Thessalonians 1:9f*

How very closely intertwined Judaism and early Christianity were may be observed by using different types for the Graeco-Roman, Jewish, and Christian elements in a verse in one of the earliest letters of Paul. The Graeco-Roman is italic, the Jewish small capitals, the Christian capitals.

'Turn to GOD *from idols*, to SERVE THE LIVING AND TRUE GOD, and to WAIT FOR HIS SON FROM HEAVEN, even JESUS WHICH DELIVERETH US from THE WRATH TO COME.'(46)

9. *Church and Synagogue Separate*

In the seventh decade of the first Christian century the situation became precarious in Judea. Revolution against the overlordship of Rome was coming on. When Paul was arrested at Jerusalem, the Roman official inquired: 'art thou not then the Egyptian who before these days stirred up to sedition and led out into the wilderness the 4000 men of the Assassins?'(47) Before Felix, Paul was accused of being a

'pestilent fellow and a mover of insurrection among all the Jews throughout the world and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.'(48) The New Testament contains many descriptions of an approaching cosmic upheaval.

> 'But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in clouds with great power and glory. . . . *Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away until all these things be accomplished.*'(49)
>
> 'And I will show wonders in the heaven above,
> And signs on the earth beneath;
> Blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke:
> The sun shall be turned into darkness,
> And the moon into blood
> Before the day of the Lord come.'(50)
>
> 'I tell you this, my brothers, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor can the perishing inherit the imperishable. Here is a secret truth for you: *not all of us are to die, but all of us are to be changed*—changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet-call. The trumpet will sound, the dead will rise imperishable, and we shall be changed.'(51)
>
> 'See that ye refuse not him that speaketh. For if they escaped not when they refused him that warned them on earth, much more shall not we escape who turn away from him that warneth from heaven: whose voice then shook the earth:

> but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only, but also the heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that have been made, that those things which are not shaken may remain.'(52)

Christians had been proclaiming the doom of the present order from the crucifixion onward. Did they share in the messianic enthusiasm in Judea in the sixties? Did they help carry the torch of revolution? Did the more balanced Jew regard this emphasis upon the near end of the world as responsible for that uprising?

In the usual version a passage in Josephus reads:

> 'Thus the Jews, after the demolition of Antonia, reduced the temple to a square, although they had it recorded in their oracles that the city and the sanctuary would be taken when the temple should become four-square. But what more than all else incited them to the war was an ambiguous oracle, likewise found in their sacred scriptures, to the effect that at that time one from their country would become ruler of the world. This they understood to mean someone of their own race, and many of their wise men went astray in their interpretation of it. The oracle, however, in reality signified the sovereignty of Vespasian, who was proclaimed emperor on Jewish soil.'(53)

In the Slavonic text, the last two sentences of this quotation read:

> 'Some understood that this meant Herod, *others the crucified Wonder-worker Jesus*, others again Vespasian.'(54)

The ambiguous oracle was a statement in Genesis that 'the sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.'(55)

The reference to Jesus as 'the crucified Wonder-worker' implies that the Christian eschatological program was still being stressed as the ordeal with Rome began. And the failure of the revolt did not result in the best of feelings between Jew and Christian. Indeed, the Christians who were in Judea fled to the mountains.(56) The permanent estrangement between Christian and Jew after 70 of the Christian era is therefore no surprise.

10. *After the Separation*

After the separation from Christianity, Judaism was rather restrained in its criticism.

Hoennicke has made a critical study of all the rabbinical texts to the insurrection of Bar Kochba and finds that the passages referring to Christianity are meagre. Even after 70 C.E., Christian and Jew are in intimate fellowship; some are also very hostile against each other. Christology is never discussed in the controversies between Jews and Christians. There is no polemic against Jesus. The Minim are not related to Jesus. To the time of Rabbi Gamaliel II, there is no mention of disputations between Jew and Christian although numerous discussions between Gentiles and Jews take place. He also alludes to the fact that relatively few fragments of the sayings of the rabbis of this period are extant. Contemporary Judaism can be described without referring to Jesus, for his immediate influence upon it was nil.(57)

In his *Jesus of Nazareth*, Klausner notes that the 'references in the Talmud to Jesus are very few; and even these have little historical value, since they partake rather of the nature of vituperation and polemic against the founders of a hated party than of objective accounts of historical value. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the Talmud authorities on the whole refer rarely to the events of the period of the Second Temple. . . . Secondly, the appearance of Jesus during the period of disturbances and confusion which befell Judea under the Herods and the Roman procurators, was so inconspicuous an event that the contemporaries of Jesus and of his first disciples hardly noticed it.'(58)

The evidence supports the view of Herford in his *Christianity in Talmud and Midrash:*

> 'in two ways, Judaism released itself from what it considered to be the danger of Christianity. It preserved only a careless and contemptuous tradition about Jesus, and resolutely resisted all attempts on the part of his Jewish-born disciples to come to terms with Jewish belief and practice. Judaism fought the enemy within her own gates; of the rival outsider, growing in power with every century, she took no notice. She went on her way, and on the line she chose for herself worked out her own salvation through centuries of noble and most tragic history. In like manner, though on other lines, Christianity went on its way and forgot its Jewish origin. In the land of its birth, and amongst the people who furnished the first disciples, Christianity was represented by a discredited and dwindling sect claiming kinship with Jews and Christians, and disowned by both.'(59)

CHAPTER XII

The Christian Interpretation of Judaism

This is a convenient place to review the Christian interpretation of Judaism both before and subsequent to separation as historically understood.

1. *Before Separation*

The earliest Christian interpretation of Judaism regarded Christianity as merely a modified Judaism. The Christian gospel was at first preached only to Jews—Jews dwelling in Jerusalem, Judea, Galilee, Samaria and along the seacoast. To become a Christian it was necessary to become a Jew. The gospel was concerned with Israel. To participate in the benefits of the gospel believers must attach themselves to Judaism. The Mosaic law must be scrupulously observed. To obtain the rewards of the messianic salvation, the requirements of the law must be punctiliously met. Missionary work might be conducted only upon the conditions of particularism and legalism. Christianity began as a lower class Jewish movement.(1)

But within the Christian community at Jerusalem there were conservative and liberal elements and situations. If attendance upon temple worship, the use of the Aramaic language, the presence of priests and Pharisees in the Christian community tended toward conservatism; attendance upon synagogue, the home meetings, the presence and freedom of women, and the use of the Greek language pro-

moted liberalism. Ere long friction and conflict presented themselves. An instance of divergence in attitude and practice is furnished by Acts 6.

> 'During these days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists began to complain against the Hebrews, on the ground that their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the twelve summoned the main body of the disciples . . . and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the holy Spirit' and others to attend to the meals.

Men like the radical Stephen not only increased collision with the religious authorities but promoted the expansion of Christianity beyond Jerusalem and Palestine. With the organization of Gentile Christian churches, new interpretations of the relation between Christianity and Judaism appeared. The earliest of these was that there are two species of Christians, Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians. The wall dividing them was the Jewish national rite. The gospel is concerned with Jew and Gentile but in a different way. The Jewish Christian must continue to observe all of the requirements of the law of Moses. Gentile Christians need not conform. The prerogatives of Israel were continued only for Jewish Christians. Hence, Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians could not fuse into a single Christian fellowship. Universalism was accepted in principle but particularism always manifested itself in practice.

This second interpretation of the relation between Christianity and Judaism was held by James the brother of Jesus and the Jerusalem conservatives. It is formulated in Acts 15. James is speaking:

> 'Hence, in my opinion, we ought not to put fresh difficulties in the way of those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles, but write them injunctions to abstain from whatever is contaminated by idols, from sexual vice, from the flesh of animals that have been strangled, and from tasting blood.'(2)

A third pre-separation Christian interpretation of Judaism is met with in the writings of Paul, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and in the Johannine literature. This view holds that the law was divine in its origin but transient in its purpose. As far as salvation is concerned, the law is abrogated. The entire Mosaic system was only of temporary validity. The religion of the Old Testament was designed for only the first stages of man's development. Salvation is available because of the death of Christ. There is only one way to God, the new-old way, the path of faith. Law and faith are incommensurable. The prerogative of Israel consists in having salvation offered to it first and again in the ultimate acceptance of the gospel on the part of Israel. The prerogative is national not individual.

The following quotation from the third chapter of Galatians illustrates Paul's approach to the problem.

> 'Then is the Law contrary to God's promises? Never! Had there been any law which had the power of producing life, righteousness would really have been due to law, but Scripture has consigned all without exception to the custody of sin, in order that the promise due to faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who have faith. Before this faith came, we were confined by the

> Law and kept in custody, with the prospect of the faith that was to be revealed; the Law thus held us as wards in discipline, till such time as Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But faith has come and we are wards no longer.'

In Romans 3 :21-26, Paul gives his view of salvation.

> 'What the Law imparts is a consciousness of sin. But now we have a righteousness of God disclosed apart from law altogether; it is attested by the Law and the prophets, but it is a righteousness of God which comes by believing in Jesus Christ. And it is meant for all who have faith. No distinctions are drawn. All have sinned, all come short of the glory of God, but they are justified for nothing by his grace through the ransom provided in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as the means of propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to demonstrate the justice of God in view of the fact that sins previously committed during the time of God's forbearance had been passed over; it was to demonstrate his justice at the present epoch, showing that God is just himself and that he justifies man on the score of faith in Jesus.'

Gentile Christians do not seem to have understood the gospel of Paul concerning Jesus. And many Jewish saints never had his experience of failure under the law. Paul raised his experience of salvation to the level of a general law and transmitted it to Augustine, Luther and Calvin.

Paul remained a Jewish patriot and monotheist to the end. All Israel would at last be redeemed. And finally the 'Son himself was to be put under Him who put everything under Christ, so that God might be everything to everyone.'(3)

2. *After Separation*

About the end of the first century of the Christian era, one might have heard Christians here and there asserting that God never had chosen Israel as his people. The ceremonial law had never been meant literally. The bloody sacrifices and ritual of the Jews were just horrible mistakes. From the beginning the Jews missed the divine promises by their literalism. The Old Testament, they said, was not a Jewish book and was not concerned with Jews. The patriarchs and the prophets were the ancestors of the Christians, the one and only people of God. All the heroes of Judaism were annexed as Christian worthies. Hebrews II contains the muster rôle of Christianity. Who are the soldiers of the cross? Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jepthah, David—in a word all Jews conspicuous for heroism and fidelity to God!

The summary of Harnack fairly states this Christian interpretation of Judaism.

> 'The chosen people throughout was the Christian people, which always existed in a sort of latent condition though it only came to light at first with Christ. From the outset the Jewish people had lost the promise; indeed, it was a question whether it had ever been meant for them at all. In any case the literal interpretation of God's revealed will proved that the people had been forsaken by God and had fallen under the sway of the devil. As this was quite clear, the final step had now to be taken, the final sentence had now to be pronounced; *the Old Testament from cover to cover, has nothing whatever to do with the Jews*. Illegally and insolently, the

> Jews had seized upon it, they had confiscated it, and tried to claim it as their own property. They had falsified it by their expositions and even by corrections and omissions. It would be a sin for Christians to say, "The book belongs to us and the Jews." No; the book belongs now and evermore, to none but Christians.'(4)

Here is some source material from the Epistle of Barnabas in which this unhistorial interpretation of Judaism emerges:

> 'You ought then to understand. And this also I ask you, as being one of yourselves, and especially as loving you all above my own life; take heed to yourselves now, and be not made like unto some, heaping up your sins and saying that *the covenant is both theirs and ours. It is ours:* but in this way did they finally lose it when Moses had just received it, for the scripture says: "And Moses was in the mount fasting forty days and forty nights, and he received the covenant from the Lord, tables of stone written with the finger and hand of the Lord." *But they turned to idols and lost it.* For thus saith the Lord: "Moses, Moses, go down quickly, for thy people, whom thou broughtest forth out of the land of Egypt, have broken the Law." *And Moses understood and cast the two tables out of his hands, and their covenant was broken in order that the covenant of Jesus, the Beloved, should be sealed in our hearts in hope of his faith.*'(5)

In the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle of Barnabas, by reference to Jacob's crossing of his hands, placing his right hand upon the head of Ephraim the second and younger son

of Joseph and his left hand upon the head of Manasses, Joseph's first born, it is again argued that Christianity is the people of the promise.

By the allegorical interpretation of the Old Testament of Judaism, Christianity was beginning to appropriate whatever it desired of the legacy of Israel.

In the course of the second century primitive Christianity evolved into Catholicism, a philosophy of doctrine plus the exaltation of a tradition protected by 'apostolic' episcopate, creed and canon. Among the reasons for the consolidation of Christianity in the orthodox Catholic system was Christian Gnosticism which sought to uproot Christianity, to separate it from its past. Gnosticism was 'pre-Christian Oriental mysticism'. Christian Gnosticism attempted to fuse this inherited theosophy with historic Christian elements. This Christian gnosticism gave special attention to the Old Testament. It refused to employ allegorization extensively, preferring to describe the God of Israel as inferior, ignorant, and even evil. They found instances of polytheism, disagreements, errors in the Old Testament. The God of Israel was too limited in power, wisdom, justice, and love. God must be absolutely good and merciful. A hard, petty, angry, passionate, repenting, and self-contradictory God could not be the loving Father of Jesus. Having no historical appreciation of the high ethical level already attained when man says, an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, instead of an entire tribe for the crime of one of its members, these Christian gnostics repudiated the God of the Old Testament and the very poor world he had fashioned.

Even after Christian Gnosticism had been excommunicated, it continued to affect Christian thinking. The church usually accepts horizontally what the heretic proposes ver-

tically. The steam-roller of orthodoxy flattens out the heretic in the roadbed of the church. What is often not appreciated is that his heresies thereby become a part of the soil of the Christian highway.(6)

The Christian interpretation of Judaism which became standard, traditional, generally accepted, eloquently defended until modern historical method compelled Christian scholarship to recognize the facts in the case, may be summarized as follows:

During the four centuries of silence between the close of the Old Testament period proper about the time of Malachi and the beginning of the Christian period, the Jews became blind to prophecy and changed the divine law into the legalism of the scribes. *Israel was the covenant people to the end of the Old Testament period.* Israel did not lose the covenant in the day of Abraham or the epoch of Moses but only four centuries before Christ. Thus the entire Old Testament was of God, inspired in every jot and tittle and could be taken over in its entirety by Christianity.

Jesus of Nazareth continued the Old Testament prophets. By fulfilling messianic prophecy he connected the true ancient people of God with the true new people of God—genuine Israel with Christianity. Christianity continues the purely spiritual and ethical elements within the Old Testament. The lasting truth of the Old Testament may be mined for by the allegorical method. Any historical occurrence may thus be made over into a permanently valid spiritual experience. One destroys history but upholds the faith. Contradictory events can be sandpapered into marvelous spiritual happenings. The Jewish people originally had the prerogative but when Israel cast off its messiah, God cast it off. Since God has decided the issue, the Christian must

accept the verdict of God and treat the Jew accordingly. The rights and privileges of the Jews under the Old Covenant have been transferred to the Gentile Christians.(7)

Such an hypothesis could have been formulated only in an age utterly ignorant of facts. Malachi, far from being the last written book of the Old Testament, originated when the first chapter of Genesis was written. The so-called four centuries of silence are among the most vocal in the history of the Hebrews. Parts of Isaiah, Joel, Job, Chronicles, Genesis, Kings, Esther, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Jonah, Daniel, the Psalter and so forth were composed, subsequently to the appearance of Malachi. The Hebrew Bible was translated into Greek after the epoch of Malachi.(8) The books requiring the entire two large volumes of Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha* for their printing were produced after Malachi. Jewish parties, institutions and dogmas adopted by Christianity originated after Malachi. Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, synagogues, sabbath, diaspora, eschatology, belief in the resurrection of the dead and intermediate beings get into the Hebrew picture after the day of Malachi.

This interpretation of the relation between Judaism and Christianity neglects utterly to account for Jesus' appearance among the Jews. How does the orthodox Christian apologist explain why Jesus should have worked within a nation four centuries after its rejection by God! And throughout his ministry Jesus confines himself to Jewish areas. He regards himself as sent to Israel and does not conduct a mission to the Gentiles. This limitation of activity to Israel became a problem for the author of the Fourth Gospel.

Reviewing the various Christian interpretations of the relation between Judaism and Christianity, Harnack was compelled to admit:

> 'Such an injustice as that done by the Gentile church to Judaism is almost unprecedented in the annals of history. The Gentile church stripped it of everything; she took away its sacred book; herself a transformation of Judaism, she cut off all connection with the parent religion. *The daughter first robbed her mother and then repudiated her.*'(9)

Historical criticism has set these interpretations of the relation between Christianity and Judaism aside as inadequate.

CHAPTER XIII

Judaism and the Capital Penalty

The historical method of interpreting the Bible demands a revision of the Christian verdict upon Judaism at two other points, namely, with reference to the power of the Jewish authorities in the time of Jesus to execute and the extent of their participation in the trial of Jesus.

It is usually granted that Pontius Pilate signed the death warrant of Jesus. But, it is said, the Roman procurator was not acting for the Roman empire when he crucified Jesus; he was acceding to the desire of the Jewish authorities. They had found Jesus guilty of blasphemy and wished to execute him but could not because Rome had deprived them of the right of capital punishment. Jesus was apparently crucified as king of the Jews but actually for blasphemy.

That the Jews did not practice crucifixion is now somewhat generally conceded. The Jews stoned for blasphemy. The fundamental law read:

> 'And he that blasphemeth the name of Yahweh, he shall surely be put to death; all the congregation shall certainly *stone* him.'(1)

Stoning was the method of execution for worship of other gods also:

> 'If there be found in the midst of thee, within any of thy gates which Yahweh thy God giveth thee, man or woman, that doth that which is evil in the sight of Yahweh, thy God, in transgressing his

> covenant, and hath gone and served other gods, and worshipped them, or the sun, or the moon, or any of the host of heaven, which I have not commanded, then shalt thou inquire diligently; and, behold, if it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel, then shalt thou bring forth that man or that woman, who hath done this evil thing, unto thy gates, even the man or woman; and thou shalt stone them to death with stones. At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is to die be put to death; at the mouth of one witness, he shall not be put to death. The hands of the witnesses shall be first upon him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So shalt thou put away the evil from the midst of thee.'(2)

The Old Testament knows of instances of exposure *by hanging after death* as further humiliation. Deuteronomy 21: 22f, mistranslated by Luther, actually reads: 'And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death and thou hang him to a tree.' The five kings were first put to death by Joshua and thereupon hanged on five trees.(3) To be sure the Sadducean high-priest and Hasmonean king Alexander Jannaeus crucified 800 opponents. But he was not orthodox and was severely condemned for his action.(4) The Talmud recognizes only stoning for blasphemy and subsequent exposure of the dead body upon a tree.

1. *The Various Interpretations of the Trial of Jesus*

The legal treatment of Jesus permits various interpretations. It has been held that Jesus was under the control of

the Romans from the arrest in Gethsemane to the death upon the cross. It has also been argued that there was a formal trial of Jesus by the Sanhedrin in the course of which he was found guilty of blasphemy. In this case Pilate may be regarded as having confirmed the sentence of the Sanhedrin or of retrying him on the charge of blasphemy or as trying him on the charge of treason presented by the Sanhedrin. A third view has been that no trial took place before the Sanhedrin. The proceedings before the Jewish authorities were informal and preliminary. This interpretation has again been ably presented by Husband in his *Prosecution of Jesus* who finds that there are insuperable difficulties in the way of considering the proceedings before the Sanhedrin as a trial. There is scarcely one episode in accordance with Jewish legal procedure. The Sanhedrin could act only as a jury not as prosecution. But a trial must precede a verdict. Moreover, according to Jewish criminal procedure all of the evidence against a prisoner had to be heard at one session. Further a day must intervene between a verdict of guilty and the final vote upon the case. Capital trials could take place only in the day time. And how much easier it would have been had the Sanhedrin purposed the death of Jesus to assassinate him in Gethsemane without risking an uprising of the people. Hence, Husband concluded:

> 'The hearing by the Sanhedrin was not a formal trial, for the Jewish courts did not possess jurisdiction in criminal cases after Judea became a Roman province. The hearing was comparable to grand jury proceedings, held for the purpose of preparing a bill to submit to the trial court. The only trial court in the province was that of the Roman governor. There was but one hearing by

> the Sanhedrin, held on the morning following the arrest. The Sanhedrin submitted to Pilate an indictment charging Jesus with false prophecy and with treason against the Roman Empire.'(5)

The only error in the judgment is the assumption that the Sanhedrin could not try capital cases. The essential mistake in the method of this noteworthy investigation was its application to Judea of the Roman procedure in other provinces. But Judea was *sui generis*.

A fourth and the valid interpretation of the legal treatment of Jesus holds that the Sanhedrin had the power to try capital charges and to execute the guilty and that the gospel narrative of the trial before the Sanhedrin is unhistorical.

2. *Schuerer's Opinion*

For one-half century the opinion of Schuerer has been regarded as final by Christian students of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. It was to the effect that while the Sanhedrin exercised civil jurisdiction according to Jewish law and enjoyed a considerable amount of criminal jurisdiction as well, possessing independent police power, in the case of capital verdicts its 'judgment required to be ratified by the authority of the procurator.' He based his conclusion upon John 18:31,—'Pilate therefore said to them, Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law. The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death'—and accepted as completely historical the gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus.

Schuerer thought that the statement in the fourth gospel was somewhat confirmed by a reminiscence in Jewish tradition:

> ' "The right of pronouncing sentences of life or death was taken from Israel forty years before the destruction of the temple." The date of the withdrawal here given is, of course, worthless, for it may be assumed as certain that this did not merely occur for the first time when Pilate was procurator, but that in fact no such right could be said to have belonged to the Jews ever since Judea came to be under procurators at all.'(6)

The view of Schuerer became imbedded in all the textbooks, and much water will go over the dam before it disappears.

3. *The View of Juster*

In 1914, Jean Juster published a two volume history of the Jews under the Roman empire. He critically examined the opinion of Schuerer and found it unhistorical. The Jewish authorities in Palestine while under Roman procurators could not only try capital cases involving religion but could also execute any found guilty. But if the Jewish leaders had found Jesus guilty on a religious charge, Jesus would have been stoned. Yet the records are unanimous in stating that Jesus was crucified. If he was crucified, only the Romans could have accomplished it. Hence, the only trial of Jesus was before the Roman procurator on charges of a political nature. He was crucified on the charge of treason. And Luke 23:21-24 and John 19:12-16 so hold. The numerous disagreements in the gospel accounts of the trial of Jesus cannot possibly be reconciled, he also held.

The world war was occupying the attention of scholars at the time of publication of the significant work of Juster. It was largely neglected until in 1931 Hans Lietzmann sup-

ported the findings of Juster and since then has defended his own conclusions against all attacks.(7)

4. *The Data*

The evidence in the case may be briefly summarized as follows:

Stephen was accused of, tried for, and found guilty of blasphemy and thereupon was stoned to death according to Jewish law. The source passage is Acts 6:12-7:60. Stephen was accused of 'talking blasphemy against Moses and God.' A trial was held before the Sanhedrin. The high-priest formally asked whether the charge was true. Stephen in a long apology, preserved in part in Acts 7, launched a bitter attack upon past and present Jews, thus confirming again and again the counts in the indictment against him. He was thereupon taken outside the city gate as required by law and accompanied by the necessary witnesses as required by law and stoned according to the law. There is no consciousness here at all of lack of power on the part of the Jewish authorities to execute offenders against their religious regulations.

Again, King Agrippa II in his letter to the emperor Caligula states that a priest or even the high-priest entering the holy of holies without right must be executed.(8)

> 'Into the holy of holies, once in the year, the high priest enters, on the day called the great feast, to offer incense, and on no other day, being then about in accordance with our national law also to offer up prayers for a fertile and ample supply of blessings, and for peace to all mankind. And if anyone else, I will not say of the Jews, but even of the priests, and those not of the lowest order, but even those

> who are in the rank next to the first, should go in there, either with him or after him, or even if the very high priest himself should enter in thither on two days of the year, or three or four times on the same day, he is subjected to inevitable death for his impiety . . .'

The right of capital punishment is here assumed to belong to the Jews.

In 62 C.E., the high priest Ananus convened the Sanhedrin, tried James the brother of Jesus and sentenced him to death by stoning. The source passage because of its importance in the debate between Lietzmann and Buechsel must be quoted in full.

> 'But this younger Ananus who, as we have told you already, took the high-priesthood, was a bold man in his temper, and very insolent; he was also of the sect of the Sadducees, who are very rigid in judging offenders above all the rest of the Jews, as we have already observed: when, therefore, Ananus was of this disposition he thought he had now a proper opportunity. Festus was now dead, and Albinus was but upon the road; so he assembled the sanhedrin of judges, and brought before them the brother of Jesus (who was called Christus) whose name was James, and some others. And when they had formed an accusation against them as breakers of the law, he delivered them to be stoned; but as for those who seemed the most equitable of the citizens, and such as were the most uneasy at the breach of the laws, they disliked what was done; they also sent to the king

> [Agrippa] desiring him to send to Ananus that he should act so no more, for that what he had already done was not to be justified, nay, some of them went also to meet Albinus, as he was upon his journey from Alexandria, and informed him, that it was not lawful for Ananus to assemble the sanhedrin without his consent . . . on which king Agrippa took the high priesthood from him [Ananus] . . . and made Jesus the son of Damneus, high priest.'(9)

Juster further referred to a narrative of Rabbi Eleazar ben Zaddock according to which the daughter of a priest was executed.(10)

In 1871, Clermont Ganneau discovered an inscription which found its way into the museum at Constantinople and which once graced the marble barrier of the inner court of the temple at Jerusalem in the days of Paul. It should be recalled that 'the inner court of the temple which only Jews might enter, stood in the North central portion of the whole enclosure, and occupied a platform thirty feet higher than the court of the Gentiles. A low wall, known as the *Soreg*, inclosed this sacred area; an intervening narrow platform, called the *Chel*, separated the wall from the inner court.' At intervals upon this wall inscriptions identical with the one discovered had been affixed and read:

> 'Let no Gentile enter within the barrier and the fence surrounding the sanctuary. Whosoever is taken so doing will be the cause of his ensuing death.'(11)

According to Acts 21:26ff, Paul was arrested on the accusation of having transgressed this regulation by bringing

Trophimus, the Ephesian, within the barrier. Josephus thrice calls attention to the statute:

> 'Proceeding across this towards the second court of the temple, one found it surrounded by a stone balustrade, three cubits high and of exquisite workmanship; in this at regular intervals stood slabs giving warning, some in Greek, others in Latin characters, of the law of purification, to wit that no foreigner was permitted to enter the holy place.'
>
> 'Thus was the first enclosure, in the midst of which and not far from it, was the second, to be gone up to by a few steps, this was encompassed by a stone wall for a partition, with an inscription, which forbade any foreigner to go in under pain of death.' (12)

Titus acknowledged that this regulation applied even to Roman citizens.(13)

Josephus also describes the Essenes, a Jewish sect, as holding courts and executing capital sentences. 'What they most of all honor, after God himself, is the name of their legislator, whom if anyone blaspheme, he is punished capitally.' Whatever may be concluded regarding the historicity of the statement, it demonstrates that it was axiomatic for Josephus that the Sanhedrin could accuse, try, sentence to death, and execute the sentence.(14)

5. *The Controversy*

The principal debate over the correctness of the Juster-hypothesis has been carried on between Friedrich Buechsel of Rostock and Hans Lietzmann of Berlin.(15)

In a masterful analysis of Juster's data, Buechsel contended that in the James instance of 62 C.E., the high priest had

acted illegally and therefore was deposed. He called attention to the Jesus son of Ananias instance of the same year according to which the magistrates brought the accused before Albinus instead of proceeding to execute him themselves.(16) The Jews of course resented the action of the Romans in depriving them of the right to execute and occasionally took the matter into their own hands as in the case of Stephen and the priest's daughter. The reference to the Essenes he held was made merely to demonstrate their reverence for Moses. Philo states a Jewish point of view but does not mention an overt act. Wherever Graeco-Roman evidence is available, it permits but one conclusion, namely, that the representative of the Roman empire is always judge and executioner and never a provincial.

Hence, said Buechsel, the case is that Josephus nowhere alleges that the Sanhedrin possessed absolute capital jurisdiction but rather clearly indicates that the high priest exceeded his legal powers in the case of James. Unrestricted capital jurisdiction of provincial courts in the Roman empire of the time of Jesus cannot be demonstrated. The Jewish Sanhedrin did not possess the right of executing Jewish religious offenders, although the Jews continued to claim that jurisdiction as a divine right. Schuerer was right; Juster is in lamentable ignorance.

In his courteous but devastating rejoinder, Lietzmann grants that the Roman procurator possessed absolutely the power of the sword. Of course he had the right to execute anyone at any time, according to the Roman law.(17) But this is not at all in dispute. The question at issue is the competency of the Roman procurator in cases involving infractions of Jewish *religious* laws. The Jewish regulations and statutes were not normative for the Roman procurator.

There are three possibilities with reference to transgressors of Jewish religious laws. Jewish criminal jurisdiction might have been denied and suppressed. Rome did not thus interfere as Schuerer noticed. Jewish criminal jurisdiction might have been independently exercised under the procurator—the view of Jean Juster, Lietzmann, and many others. Finally, the Jewish authorities might have had the power to judge and condemn but must report their verdict to the Roman procurator who must confirm the death sentence, the traditional view.

The method of appealing to Roman criminal procedure in other provinces and applying it to Judea is clearly erroneous, since Judea was under exceptions. *Hence no analogies for Judea can possibly be found.* There was a Jewish theocracy. Rome had learned how to respect the religious scruples of Judaism not only in Palestine but throughout the empire. The Jews were even excused from the worship of the emperor. Rome wisely granted religious dispensations to the Jews of the diaspora and Palestine and among them was the right of the Sanhedrin to try and execute religious offenders.

Dealing more particularly with the James-Ananus instance, Lietzmann observes that it involved a tyrannical act against the unwelcome Christians, that the fact of execution shows that the Sanhedrin had that formal right, that a complaint against Ananus was lodged both with King Agrippa and the incoming Roman procurator Albinus. Some citizens of Jerusalem felt that the complaint against James was not religious but political and that it must therefore be brought to the attention of the Roman governor. Others at Jerusalem were convinced that James was religiously at fault but that the procedure of Ananus had been tyrannical. The

Pharisees and Sadducees viewed James' infraction of the law differently. In any case, the verdict had been too harsh. Naturally the unjust judgment was reported to both King Agrippa and to the Roman procurator Albinus.

If the various instances of definite Jewish judicial procedure are not to be conceded, then it seems strange that no hint of Roman objection or interference appears. Why should the Stephen instance be considered lynch law when the narrative does not demand such an hypothesis?

Coming to John 18:31, to say nothing about the peculiar conclusion 'that the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, by which he had indicated the kind of death he was to die', does not the command of Pilate 'take him yourselves, and sentence him according to your own law', imply that the Jews possessed jurisdiction over capital cases?

Indeed, Stephen Liberty has cited an instance according to which the emperor Claudius handed over a Roman officer, Celer, the tribune, implicated in a quarrel between the Jews and the Samaritans, to the Jews for execution:

> Claudius 'also gave order, that Celer the tribune should be carried back to Jerusalem, and should be drawn through the city in the sight of all the people, and then should be slain.'
> '. . . . and sent Celer bound to Jerusalem, to be delivered over to the Jews to be tormented, that he should be drawn around the city and then beheaded.'(18)

As far as the temple inscription is concerned, this particular right to execute aliens entering the holy place was ancient. When the Roman empire recognized it, a definite concession was made to popular prejudice. Moreover, the grant

did not acknowledge the general competency of the Sanhedrin. The Sanhedrin had jurisdiction only over the Jews; the jurisdiction over non-Jews was reserved to the Roman police power. And the Roman citizen could appeal from the decision of a governor to the emperor. The Sanhedrin could not have put to death an alien transgressing the temple regulation unless Rome had definitely conferred such power upon it. Now, if in such exceptional cases, the competency of the Sanhedrin was extended to include jurisdiction even over Roman citizens, then certainly in regular instances of transgression of Jewish religious laws involving Jews, Rome would not have thought of interfering with the judicial power of that same Sanhedrin.

Apparently, then, the Jews of the time of Jesus still possessed the right to try and to execute Jewish offenders against Jewish religious regulations. As far as Jesus of Nazareth is concerned, the Jewish leaders could have disposed of him secretly in the garden of Gethsemane without causing any tumult among the people. They could also have tried Jesus as a religious offender, found him guilty of blasphemy and have stoned him. They did neither. The charge against him was political and therefore came under the jurisdiction of the Roman procurator. Pilate dealt with Jesus on the charge of treason.

CHAPTER XIV

The Critics Look at the Gospels

In the year 1931 there appeared in the proceedings of the Berlin Academy an article of some ten pages upon *The Trial of Jesus*. It was written by Professor Hans Lietzmann and has made history. Far more radical conclusions had been arrived at by earlier scholars. But Lietzmann was engaged in a very sober treatment of the problem, refusing to throw 'the assured results of synoptic study to the winds' and insisting upon a conservative handling of the data, and had long since achieved an enviable reputation as a sound and dependable historian.(1)

Born at Duesseldorf in 1875, Lietzmann was at twenty-five *Privatdozent* in ancient church history at the University of Bonn. In 1905 he was appointed *ausserordentlicher* professor in Jena and advanced to *ordentlicher* professor there three years later. For the last eight years, Lietzmann had been professor at the University of Berlin. When only twenty-one years of age, he published his first book, entitled, *The Son of Man*. Since then articles by the hundred and scores of books and critical studies have appeared. He is also the editor of the famous journal, *Zeitschrift fuer die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunden der aelteren Kirche*. On the data side he is beyond comparison greatest; in interpretation, he is dependable and unexcelled. His many honors and trophies have come to him because of precise and thoroughly reliable investigation.

In his memorable monograph covering the trial of Jesus, Professor Lietzmann proved that the gospel of Mark was the primary source of the other gospel accounts of the story of passion week. Matthew, Luke, and John have no independent historical value; they are dependent upon Mark and expansions of his narrative. What, then, occurred at the trial and crucifixion of Jesus according to Mark's gospel?

1. *Analysis of the Trial Scene of Mark's Gospel*

Mark's account, as it stands, contains these principal sections: 1. The journey to the Mount of Olives and the prediction of the three-fold denial by Peter, Mark 14:26-31; 2. The agony in Gethsemane with exhortation addressed to Peter, verses 32 to 42; 3. The arrest of Jesus, verses 43 to 52; 4. The examination of Jesus before the Sanhedrin and the denial by Peter, verses 53-72; 5. The examination of Jesus by Pilate, the Barabbas episode, and the sentence, Mark 15:1-15; 6. The mockery of Jesus by the soldiers, verses 16-20; 7. The journey to Golgotha, the crucifixion, passion, and death, verses 21-41; 8. The burial of Jesus, verses 42 to 47; 9. The resurrection of Jesus, Mark 16:1-8.

The first four sections are intimately related through reference to the denial by Peter. They begin with the prediction of that denial; they end with the overt act of the denial. Throughout, Peter is the principal actor, not Jesus. Peter himself seems to be the ultimate source for this phase of the narrative. Its historicity may not be questioned, because the primitive Christian church would certainly not have been guilty of the stupidity of inventing this shameful failure of one of its founders. And the frail, trembling Jesus of Gethsemane is another indication of genuineness.

2. *Historicity of the Trial by the Sanhedrin*

May the report of a trial by the Sanhedrin be regarded as historical? Lietzmann's answer was an emphatic 'no'.

The material in question is as follows:

> 53. And they led Jesus away to the high priest: and with him were assembled all the chief priests and the elders and the scribes.
>
> 54. And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.
>
> 55. And the chief priests and all the council sought for witness against Jesus to put him to death; and found none.
>
> 56. For many bare false witness against him, but their witness agreed not together.
>
> 57. And there arose certain, and bare false witness against him, saying,
>
> 58. We heard him say, I will destroy this temple that is made with hands, and within three days I will build another made without hands.
>
> 59. But neither so did their witness agree together.
>
> 60. And the high priest stood up in the midst, and asked Jesus, saying, Answerest thou nothing? what *is it which* these witness against thee?
>
> 61. But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?
>
> 62. And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

63. Then the high priest rent his clothes, and saith, What need we any further witnesses?

64. Ye have heard the blasphemy: what think ye? and they all condemned him to be guilty of death.

65. And some began to spit on him, and to cover his face, and to buffet him, and to say unto him, Prophesy: and the servants did strike him with the palms of their hands.

66. And as Peter was beneath in the palace, there cometh one of the maids of the high priest:

67. And when she saw Peter warming himself, she looked upon him, and said, And thou also wast with Jesus of Nazareth.

68. But he denied, saying, I know not, neither understand I what thou sayest. And he went out into the porch: and the cock crew.

69. And a maid saw him again, and began to say to them that stood by, This is *one* of them.

70. And he denied it again. And a little after, they that stood by said again to Peter, Surely thou art *one* of them: for thou art a Galilean and thy speech agreeth *thereto*.

71. But he began to curse and to swear, *saying*, I know not this man of whom ye speak.

72. And the second time the cock crew. And Peter called to mind the word that Jesus said unto him, Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice. And when he thought thereon, he wept.(2)

The examination before the Sanhedrin cannot go back to Peter as source, since he remained in the court of the high-

priest. A little later one of the maids of the high-priest taunts him 'beneath the court'. This section resulted from the needs of the Christian apologetic which reconstructed what it thought was the course of procedure. The charge of destroying the temple and in three days building another without hands seems very strange. For elsewhere Jesus is described as cleansing the temple because he regarded it as holy. Opposition to the Jerusalem temple on the part of the followers of Jesus was a much later development. The Acts of the Apostles describes them as visiting the temple and participating in the ritual. The silence of Jesus in the presence of the high-priest was derived from the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah which the Christian apologetic applied to the career of Jesus.

The principal matter here is the question of the high-priest, 'Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?' The purported reply of Jesus was, 'I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.'(3) The high priest then rent his clothes and declared Jesus guilty of blasphemy.(4) Wherein did the blasphemy consist? Jesus did not employ the divine name. And yet blasphemy involved the employment of that name. Both the high priest and Jesus avoided the use of the Name! There might be fanaticism and enthusiasm here but not blasphemy.

It was a requirement of Jewish judicial procedure that at least one witness use the very words of the accused and that the Ineffable Name be distinctly pronounced before the death sentence could be imposed and executed.(5) Neither of these prescriptions appears in this description:

Moreover, 'Son of God' was not a customary Jewish messianic title. One did not say 'son of Elohim'! Israel did not

ascribe divine ancestry either to itself or its expected king. The second psalm was not of essential significance for the Jewish idea of messiah in either earlier or later time. According to Mark, Jesus was not addressed as 'Son of God' when asked to descend from the cross.(6) And at Caesarea Philippi, according to Mark, the reply of Peter to the question of Jesus, 'Who do men say that I am' was simply, 'Thou art the Christ'.(7) Jesus was not called 'Son of God' by his contemporaries and it was not a customary messianic title.(8) Much less was 'Son of the Blessed' a current messianic title or blasphemous.

'Son of God' was a Greek messianic title. It was soon naturalized in the Gentile Christian church. The Gospel of Mark has it.(9) The Gospel of Matthew inserts it in the scene at Caesarea Philippi and also in the crucifixion narrative.(10) Luke has it in chapter 22:70.

In the seventh chapter of The Acts, Stephen is described as beholding 'the heavens opened and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.' Stephen identified the messiah with the crucified Jesus of Nazareth. This was blasphemy, since Jesus had been hanged to a tree. And God had called such an one accursed. God had now judged Jesus. To reverse the judgment of God was blasphemy.

Again, the mocking of Jesus, verse 65, is not motivated. Why should a blasphemer be expected to prophesy? Mark's narrative implies something like 'who it is that struck thee.' This scene is very improbable.

By letting verse 66 continue verse 54, the older story of Mark can be recovered:

> 'And Peter followed him afar off, even into the palace of the high-priest: and he sat with the servants, and warmed himself at the fire.

'And as Peter was beneath in the palace there cometh one of the maids of the high priest.'

Finally, chapter 15:1ff of Mark's gospel fails in any way to take 14:55-65 into consideration.

Therefore, Lietzmann concluded, Mark 14:55-65 is an interpolation without historical justification.

If this be true, Jesus was arrested in the garden of Gethsemane at night, kept in ward by the Jewish authorities until the morning, and then indicted before the Roman procurator.

But who will estimate the extent of the injury done Judaism because this interpolation has been considered authentic for almost nineteen centuries!

A rereading of the other gospel accounts of the procedure before the Sanhedrin will reveal no slight amount of expansion of Mark and disagreement with him. The Christian church has never been in possession of authentic data on what transpired before the Sanhedrin.

3. *Trial of Jesus by Pilate*

There was but one trial of Jesus and that was by the Roman procurator Pilate. It is narrated in Mark 15:1-15.

> And straightway in the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council, and bound Jesus, and carried *him* away, and delivered *him* to Pilate.
>
> 2. And Pilate asked him, Art thou the King of the Jews? And he answering said unto him, Thou sayest *it*.
>
> 3. And the chief priests accused him of many things; but he answered nothing.

4. And Pilate asked him again, saying, Answerest thou nothing? behold how many things they witness against thee.

5. But Jesus yet answered nothing; so that Pilate marvelled.

6. Now at *that* feast he released unto them one prisoner, whomsoever they desired.

7. And there was *one* named Barabbas, *which lay* bound with them that had made insurrection with him, who had committed murder in the insurrection.

8. And the multitude, crying aloud, began to desire *him to do* as he had ever done unto them.

9. But Pilate answered them, saying, Will ye that I release unto you the King of the Jews?

10. For he knew that the chief priests had delivered him for envy.

11. But the chief priests moved the people, that he should rather release Barabbas unto them.

12. And Pilate answered, and said again unto them, What will ye then that I shall do *unto him* whom ye call the King of the Jews?

13. And they cried out again, Crucify him.

14. Then Pilate said unto them, Why, what evil hath he done? And they cried out the more exceedingly, Crucify him.

15. And *so* Pilate, willing to content the people, released Barabbas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged *him*, to be crucified.

A political indictment was presented against Jesus. He was accused of claiming kingship. Pilate's examination

turned altogether on this and his verdict and the inscription on the cross support the conclusion.

Why, then, was Jesus put to death? The Christian tradition in its earlier and later synoptic forms and in its Johannine form is in complete agreement in stating that the cause of the death of Jesus was a charge of kingship. Not one of the canonical gospels has utterly departed from the historical course of the trial. '*Jesus was condemned as a revolutionary, and accordingly crucified,*' says Lietzmann.

The earliest followers of Jesus believed him to be the Messiah. They believed that before Calvary and in spite of Calvary, in spite of Jesus' humiliating and unexpected death upon the cross, in spite of his last shriek, 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me'. But they had to revise their notion of Messiah!

4. *The Verdict of Scholarship*

All historical investigators, Christian as well as non-Christian, recognize some degree of expansion in the gospel accounts of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus. Christian scholarship is of two sorts, historical and fundamentalist. Each of these kinds is represented by innumerable varieties. In what follows the aim has been to summarize the general verdict of objective scholarship regarding the historicity of the gospel story. There is space to mention only a few different types of criticism.

Forty years ago, Brandt, in his *Die Evangelische Geschichte* devoted an entire section to the question whether Jesus was actually put to death at the instigation of the Jews and concluded that the description of the trial by Sanhedrin in Mark and that of the trial by Pilate in John were unhistorical. Pilate crucified Jesus, but a Christian church existed in Jeru-

salem to the outbreak of the war against Rome. The gospels originated at a time when Christianity could hope to exist only beyond Palestine. Their attitude was conditioned by this fact.(11)

Renan, who could not be accused of friendship with Israel, nevertheless wrote in his *Life of Jesus:*

> 'By a condescension which was to deliver his name to the scourges of history, Pilate yielded, casting, it is said, upon the Jews all responsibility for what should follow. The latter, according to the Christians, accepted it fully, crying: "His blood be upon us and on our children". Were these words really pronounced? We may doubt it.'(12)

Professor A. B. Bruce, then of Free Church College, Glasgow, had no considerable reputation for radicalism, yet he confessed:

> 'For modern criticism, the passion story even in its most historic version is not pure truth but truth mixed with doubtful legend.'(13)

Arno Neumann put it about as cautiously:

> 'In our judgment on Pilate, indeed, we must not fail to remember that the gospels and most clearly those of later date, Luke and John, reveal the desire to make his guilt appear as light as possible.'(14)

Walter Bauer in his *Das Leben Jesu im Zeitalter der neutestamentlichen Apokryphen* judged that the gospel of Mark approached historical accuracy but that the expansion from Mark to John could be traced by the tendency to represent the innocence of Jesus as beyond all question. The tragic

element in the situation was that the total guilt for the death of Jesus was finally saddled upon the Jews.(15)

Guignebert in his *Christianity Past and Present* was a little more outspoken:

> 'According to all appearances, the efforts of our evangelists to absolve the Roman from guilt, and lay upon the Jews the entire responsibility for the crime, are not inspired by a desire to be true to the facts, but by a desire to humor the Roman authorities, for they were writing it at a time when these authorities were the sole support of the Christians against the animosity displayed toward them by the synagogue.'(16)

In his *A Short History of Christianity*, Reinach said:

> 'The current belief that the Roman governor merely ratified a sentence pronounced by a Jewish tribunal is manifestly absurd. The Gospel narrative combines two traditions, one attributing the sentence to the Romans, the other (probably more recent) to the Jews. But if the Jews had condemned Jesus, He would have been stoned, crucifixion being unknown to Hebrew law.'(17)

Warschauer in *The Historical Life of Christ* referring to the exculpation of Pilate by the evangelists wrote:

> 'These and similar touches, it is safe to say, are mere by-products of the anti-Jewish polemic which flourished in the early church; Pilate's persistent pleading on behalf of Jesus, his omission to pronounce the fatal sentence, belong as little to the region of fact as his handing the prisoner over to

> the Jews to put him to death. But what are we to say to the whole episode which centres in the people's choice between Jesus and Barabbas? . . . That Pilate should have had no choice but to give in to this insensate clamour, with a garrison at his disposal for the suppression of disorder, is another quite unlikely trait in a narrative which it is impossible to accept as history.'(18)

Georg Bertram in his *Die Leidensgeschichte Jesu und der Christuskult* pointed out that the historical roots in the gospel account of the passion of Jesus are overgrown with the underbrush of legend. The gospels inform us how the early church constructed the scene of the trial but not what really occurred. The last week of Jesus is a cult-picture in the framework of the primitive Christian community. Polemic and apologetic were subject to devotional purpose.(19)

Shirley Jackson Case holds a preeminent rank for objectivity among American church historians. In his *Jesus, a new Biography*, he summarized thus:

> 'A critical discussion regarding the process of the trial has often been carried on laboriously, but it has little or no point with reference to the determination of Jesus' own fate. As described in the gospels the whole story is colored by later Christian interests. The dominating concern of the Christian preacher in that gospel-making age was to cast blame upon the Jews and to relieve the Gentiles of responsibility. The guilt of the Jews was magnified when Pilate was made to order the execution against his will. In the original situation, certainly, the procurator acted freely and probab-

> ly with full satisfaction to himself. He saw in Jesus a potential revolutionary whose removal would be a warning to all future agitators.'(20)

Even F. C. Burkitt, reviewing Lietzmann's monograph in the *Journal of Theological Studies*, approving his method of investigation and noting that the result of the study indicates that Jesus was crucified on a charge of revolution, finally grants that Lietzmann certainly has destroyed the legal views of Mark 14:53-65, the 'trial before the high-priest', even if he did not succeed in effacing its credibility, that this section does not deserve the 'same measure of historical respect' as the remainder of Mark 14.(21)

The Reverend Stephen Liberty, examining chaplain to the bishop of Gloucester, approving Professor Lietzmann's contentions in part, holds that the 'Roman sentence was the only effective one in this case,' that the Jewish trial was 'negligible as an immediate cause of the crucifixion,' and that John 18:31 must be interpreted not of 'a settled condition of administration' but of the inability of the Jews to put a person to death during the Passover Festival. Otherwise John 18:32, 12:32f, 5:18, 7:1, 25 provide much difficulty. Jesus would have been stoned, had the Jews and not the Romans executed him.(22)

In an article in the *Zeitschrift fuer die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, Dibelius commenting upon the monograph of Lietzmann upon the trial of Jesus revealed himself as going far beyond the Berlin historian, considering only these elements authentic in the gospel narrative of the passion: 1. Mark 14:2; 2. The *fact* of a last meal between Jesus and his disciples; 3. The arrest of Jesus with the help of Judas; 4. The condemnation by Pilate; 5. The *fact* of a journey to Golgotha; 6. The *fact* of the crucifixion of Jesus.(23)

Professor R. Bultmann of Marburg regards the entire story of the passion of Jesus as recorded in the canonical gospels as an 'illustration of agglutinative processes.' He is convinced that Jesus died upon the cross like other revolutionaries as a messianic prophet.(24)

Commenting upon the findings of the *Formgeschichtliche Schule*, Professor Henry J. Cadbury, then of Harvard University, concluded:

> 'Thus while a study of the origin of the gospels serves to dissipate that greatest of all myths—the myth of a simon-pure tradition, it assures us that in believing in the historicity of Jesus we are not following cunningly devised fables. In spite of almost protean changes in the history of tradition, no suspicion arises of deliberate fiction, least of all on the part of the evangelists themselves. If they are not primitive in all their points of view, it is because the material that came to them was no longer primitive. Like all ancient writers they were largely at the mercy of their sources. Nor was deliberate falsification a motive in the preceding stages. We need not doubt that Jesus was born, lived, and died. Perhaps Old Testament motifs influenced the traditions of Jesus' death, probably both alien and Jewish influences affected the story of his birth; but such influences were unconscious and gradual, and so subtly intergrown with one another and with the older material as to defy exact demarcation. But the impossibility of obtaining exact results in details need not hide from our eyes the general probability of such a prehistoric story of the gospel tradition as has been brought to our attention.'(25)

In 1931, James Mackinnon published his *Historic Jesus*. The volume is significant on account of the attainments of its author and the conclusions this careful scholar has reached regarding the pertinent questions in the life and teachings of Jesus.

James Mackinnon had been teaching for three and one-half decades. He has produced more than a dozen solid books. His four volume work on Luther and the Reformation is among the most discriminating in the field. For twelve years he lectured in history at the University of St. Andrews. For a quarter of a century he has been at the University of Edinburgh, a portion of the time as the Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History. When such a student publishes such a book, sober scholarship must give attention.

Throughout the volume, with unfaltering honesty the attitude is that of historical criticism. There is no compromise with truth. The gospels are treated as historical documents.

The index should be consulted for the various phases of the Jewish problem. This slight excerpt must suffice:

> 'The reality of this elaboration of the trial [in the gospel of John] has been forcibly questioned on both legal and historic grounds. The characteristic Johannine apologetic is at all events very marked. It is a telling example of the author's creative genius and his method of writing history, which, with a rare skill makes history the medium of the author's apologetic purpose. His apologetic explanation of the crucifixion of Jesus as a common malefactor and as the victim of the implacable and odious hostility of the Jews is legitimate enough

> as a defense of Christianity. But to make Pilate and the Jews so obviously the media of this apologetic is rather overdoing the liberty he considers himself entitled to take with historic fact.'(26)

As a final illustration of re-thinking Calvary, the critical reconstruction of what occurred at Jesus' farewell meal with his disciples must suffice.

There are various references to the Lord's Supper in the New Testament.(27) The earliest extant description of the institution of the eucharist is met with in I Corinthians 11 and was composed one-quarter of a century after the death of Jesus. The apostle Paul, severely rebuking Corinthian Christians because of certain improprieties in worship, remarks:

> 'I passed on to you what I received from the Lord himself, namely, that on the night he was betrayed the Lord Jesus took a loaf, and after thanking God he broke it, saying, "This means my body, broken for you; do this in memory of me." In the same way he took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup means the new covenant ratified by my blood; as often as you drink it, do it in memory of me." For as often as you eat this loaf and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.'(28)

According to the synoptic gospels, Jesus' last meal with his disciples took place on Nisan 14 after sunset and his crucifixion on the next morning. In the gospel of Mark, the words of institution are:

> 'And as they were eating he took a loaf, and after blessing he broke and gave it to them, saying,

> "Take this, it means my body." He also took a cup and after thanking God he gave it to them, and they all drank of it; he said to them, "This means my covenant-blood which is shed for many; truly I tell you, I will never drink the produce of the vine again till the day I drink it new within the Realm of God".'(29)

With the gospel of Mark, the gospel of Matthew is virtually in agreement.(30)

But the gospel of Luke offers a very peculiar, puzzling, and striking text. Here the manuscript readings are so varied that some sort of a reconstruction is usually attempted. Of all proposed thus far, the following reconstruction seems most satisfactory:

> 'He said to them, "I have longed eagerly to eat this passover with you before I suffer, for I tell you I will never eat the passover again till the fulfilment of it in the Reign of God; I will never drink the produce of the vine again till such time as God's Reign comes".'(31)

The earliest text of the gospel of Luke, therefore, states that Jesus at what proved to be his farewell meal with his disciples expressed the hope of participating with them in the inauguration of the kingdom of God in the near future. And the account of both Mark and Matthew still confirms this point of view.(32) The gospel of John does not contain a narrative of the institution of the Lord's Supper.

Paul, on the other hand, clearly affirms that Jesus during the institution of the eucharist not only referred to his impending death but also interpreted that death as redemptive. With this the gospels of Mark and Matthew in their present

form agree. But the shorter reconstructed text of the gospel of Luke knows only of Jesus' willingness to suffer. Moreover, Luke 22:27, parallel to Mark 10:45, revises the ransom-passage into 'but I am in the midst of you as he that serveth'!

What, then, was the earliest Christian tradition regarding the significance of Jesus' farewell meal with his disciples? The final answer must depend upon whether this last meal was a passover.

The earliest witness to this parting meal of Jesus, Paul, locates it in 'the night in which he was betrayed', describing Christ as 'our paschal lamb'. The implication is that for Paul the crucifixion happened on the morning of Nisan 14, whereas the synoptic writers assign it to Nisan 15.(33)

Strange as it may appear, the Lord's Supper does not continue the Jewish passover, since it does not involve the consumption of a lamb, the recitation of the story of the exodus, the use of unleavened bread, generally, or the drinking of four cups of wine. It has been and is a daily, weekly, monthly celebration rather than an annual event. Indeed, primitive Christians participated in the keeping of the Jewish passover.(34)

Again, the farewell meal of Jesus was not a passover. The Gospel of John plainly states that the Jewish leaders had not eaten the passover on the morning of the crucifixion and that the day of the death of Jesus was the preparation for the passover. The Gospel of John supports Paul in locating the death of Jesus on the afternoon of Nisan 14.(35)

This correct dating of the crucifixion can still be discovered in even the revised tradition of the synoptic gospels. Mark 14:1 dates the immediately following events, Nisan 12; Mark 14:2 locates the arrest and death of Jesus before the passover; Mark 14:22 lets Jesus break leavened

bread at the 'passover' instead of unleavened bread as prescribed.(36) The arrest of Jesus, the session of the Sanhedrin, the trial, condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus on the day of the passover would have been illegal. Simon of Cyrene is represented as coming from the country on the holy day of the passover! Wealthy Joseph of Arimathea, a councilor, a good and righteous man, purchases a linen cloth and removes Jesus from the cross on the same holy day! Likewise, the women buy and prepare spices and ointments during the holy feast! Yet the evening of the crucifixion is called the 'preparation'!(37)

From all this, it is evident that some Christians, four decades after the death of Jesus when the synoptic gospels were written, were interpreting the last meal of Jesus with his disciples as a passover, whereas Paul and the gospel of John and the earlier unrevised synoptic tradition are not aware of this point of view. Further, the earlier form of the gospel of Luke contained no reference to the redemptive value of the suffering of Jesus.(38)

It has been suggested that the farewell meal of Jesus was a '*kiddush*'. Judaism was accustomed to celebrate the '*kiddush*, a ceremony and prayer by which the holiness of the Sabbath or of a festival was proclaimed.'(39) At this sanctification ceremony, a group of pious Jews met to engage in religious conversation and to enjoy a simple meal together at the conclusion of which a cup of wine, over which a benediction had been pronounced, was drunk. Such a prayer of thanksgiving might begin, 'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, our God, King of the world, creator of the fruit of the vine'.(40)

In the Acts of the Apostles, the oldest eucharistic festival of the Christian church is known merely as the 'breaking of bread'. It was observed in private houses and preceded a

general meal. Those participating in it rejoiced because the Lord had survived death and because his parousia would soon occur. It was the continuation of companionship with Jesus and had no reference to an expiatory death. In the apocryphal Acts of John and Thomas, it still appears.(41)

This earliest eucharist with no reminiscence of the night in which Jesus was betrayed or of his expiatory death was still being kept in the second century. The *Didache* is explicit at this point. It directs Christians to confess their transgressions and thereupon to assemble upon the Lord's Day to break bread and hold eucharist. A prayer was first pronounced over the cup and then another over the broken bread. At the close of the ritual, a general prayer was spoken.

The prayer concerning the cup contained no reference to the death of Jesus. Its significance was messianic. It read:

> 'We give thanks to thee, our Father, for the holy vine of David thy child, which thou didst make known to us through Jesus thy child; to thee be glory forever.'

In like manner, the prayer concerning the bread was not related to the death of Jesus but to his revelation of the Father. The broken bread did not have to do with the body of Jesus but with life, immortality, and the gathering of the church in the messianic kingdom. It read, in part:

> 'As this broken bread was scattered upon the mountains and was brought together and became one, so let thy church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into thy kingdom . . .'

The ritual of the *Didache* is not acquainted with an institution of the eucharist by Christ, does not hint at a mystical relation between cup and blood or bread and body.(42)

When and by whom was the 'breaking of bread' of the earliest church converted into a eucharist with the equations bread = body, wine = blood? That transformation was due to the apostle Paul. 'I myself,' Paul says, 'had from the Master the account which I have in turn given you.' The revelation given him by the Lord, the apostle thereupon announces. He assigned the institution of the Lord's Supper to the night of the betrayal. He made the celebration of the eucharist a cult-act, a part of the liturgy of early Christianity. He emphasized the equations bread = body and wine = blood, the sacrifice of Christ as the Christian paschal lamb. He turned the eucharist into a memorial of the death of Jesus. He introduced the command to repeat. He retained from the earlier celebration its eschatological element: 'till he come'. By about A.D. 70, the Pauline interpretation of the farewell meal had been largely accepted and is reflected in the synoptic accounts of the farewell meal of Jesus. The closer association with the Jewish passover resulted from the proximity of the last meal of Jesus to that festival.

But Jesus until the experience in Gethsemane had not concluded that his death was the will of God.

Why continue? History has rendered its decision. A critical revision of the gospel story of passion week must be made before there can be an approach to what really occurred in Jerusalem back there. And the more rigorous and relentless criticism becomes, the greater would seem to be the obligation of the Christian to confess his ancestors' sins to Judaism.

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EPILOGUE

Reconciliation and Cooperation

There are over two hundred Christian varieties in the United States alone at the present time. Catholic is arrayed against Catholic, and Protestant opposes Protestant. Between Catholicism and Protestantism a deep chasm yawns. Christianity and Judaism do not appreciate each other. Those who regard all religion as a retarding force fight on relentlessly.

The real issue in the western world today is not whether Catholicism, Protestantism or Judaism will survive but whether religion will prosper. The continuation of faith in God in western culture depends upon the reconciliation and cooperation between Christianity and Judaism.

1. *The Christian Confession of Sin*

Counts in the indictment against Christianity are listed as failure in mission, departure from the ideals of its founder, loss in appeal and attractiveness, adherence to an antiquated and complicated theology, 'relapse from the founder's lofty ideal of personal fellowship with God,'(1) division over belief, worship and organization, inability and

lack of heroism in applying the principles of the gospel of Jesus to existing, glaring unethical relationships of life.

This study has added another count to the indictment against Christianity, namely, its failure adequately to confess its sin with reference to Israel. Fortunately, individual Christians are beginning to recognize this duty of repentance toward Israel. Recently Christian ministers of many different denominations went on record regarding Christian injustice toward Judaism. Four representative confessions of sin by prominent Christian leaders are here set down as exhibits in the case.

Among recent Christian acknowledgments of wrong done Israel, the statement by the Reverend Henry M. Edmonds of Birmingham, Alabama, delivered at the Vanderbilt School of Religion, deserves conspicuous notice.

> 'We have damned you for the very attitudes which we ourselves have made inevitable. We have robbed you and now criticize you for being secretive. We have driven you together like sheep in a storm and now call you clannish.
>
> 'We have accused you of materialism, because you have been successful in business. Your prosperity has been an evidence of a mercenary mind, ours an evidence of the favor of God.
>
> 'We have taken your Bible over and made it ours and said never a word of appreciation of the genius for God which produced it. Through all the Christian centuries our ritual has rested upon yours and in these days of enrichment of worship we discover once more how rich yours is—but no intimation of thanks.

> 'We have called peace a Christian attitude, forgetting that it was a Jew who first used those words, which now belong to humanity, about beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks.'(2)

Peter Ainslie of the Christian Temple, Baltimore, in his fearless way, put it:

> 'It has been most unfortunate that Christians have been so hostile against Jews through the centuries. It has reflected not only on them, but on Jesus whom they attempt to interpret. Their attitude was based upon a falsehood and the Christians' record makes perhaps the darkest page in human history. I hope the time will come when Christians everywhere will not hesitate to repudiate this conduct and declare it to be both unchristian and inhuman, whether done by kings, popes, priests, politicians, or populace.'(3)

The Christian dilemma has been thus described by John Haynes Holmes:

> 'Put the worst possible construction upon the connection of the Jews with Jesus' death! Hold them to be exclusively and cruelly responsible for this monstrous crime! They would still be guilty of nothing more or worse than other men have been guilty of under the same circumstances against their own greatest prophets and heroes.'(4)

The Reverend Allen E. Claxton, pastor of Trinity Union Methodist Episcopal Church, Providence, Rhode Island, also has dwelt upon the inconsistency in Christianity's attitude toward Judaism:

'I believe the time has come for Christians to take seriously the task of removing from the New Testament the implications that the Jewish race must pay eternal reparation for the death of Jesus. There is no evidence that the Jewish people as a whole agreed or had any part in the condemnation and crucifixion of Jesus. The New Testament tells us that the common people heard him gladly. Even if they all had agreed that he should be crucified, I can see no reason for condemning their children and their children's children because of this ancient error. If modern Christians today were being held up to scorn for mistakes of their leaders in the past, I wonder how we would answer for the Inquisition, the burning of John Huss, and the persecution of the witches in Salem. It seems to me an affront to Jesus that we should be so willing to forgive our leaders for their mistakes and not forgive Jesus' own countrymen for whom he himself prayed through his dying lips, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do".'(5)

The recent Christmas message of thirty Protestant leaders has not received the publicity it deserves as inaugurating a new era of corporate disavowal of anti-Semitism. It contained the following:

'We deplore the long record of wrongs from which the Jewish people have suffered in the past often from the hands of those who have professed the Christian faith and who have yet been guilty of acts utterly alien to Christian teaching and spirit.
'We declare our disavowal of anti-Semitism in

every form and our purpose to remove by every available means its causes and manifestations in order that we may share with our fellow citizens of Jewish heritage, every political, educational, commercial, social, and religious opportunity.'(6)

2. *The Miracle That Is Israel*

On maps of the world, Palestine receives about one-fifth of the space allotted to the state of New York. Geographically it is the connecting link between the Nile valley and the Tigris-Euphrates valley. Politically it was in ancient times the bone of contention between Egypt and the nations of the nearer Orient. Commercially it was an emporium of trade. But the miracle of Palestine is Israel—the religion Israel developed and transmitted to the western world and Israel itself. Through more than three thousand years, from Moses to Rosenwald, Israel has exhibited unparalleled heroism, tenacity, devotion and fidelity to its ideals. It has not passed away like Egypt and Greece and Rome. It not only survives; it lives.

Today throughout the world modern Jews believe as their old-time forefathers believed. They live amid the traditions of their ancestors. Today they keep Rosh Hashonah, their New Year, by assembling along the banks of some stream or river, reciting verses from the prophets and uttering penitential prayers. On the concluding day of the Festival of Tabernacles, 'the one year cycle of the reading of the Pentateuch is completed and *resumed*.' They then remind themselves how during the Spanish inquisition the Marrano Jews built subterranean tabernacles in spite of threat of death. The Jews still commemorate in their Feast of Dedication the heroism of the Maccabees. Their children whirl their

Haman 'gregger', or rattle, during the reading of Israel's escape through the faithfulness of Esther and Mordecai. At the feast of the Passover, a cup for Elijah is prepared, since he may enter a Jewish home unbidden and a child opens the door to admit the eagerly awaited guest. What July fourth is to the citizen of the United States, the Passover is to the Jew. The proclamation of the Ten Commandments at Sinai is still commemorated in Shovuoth. When the destruction of the holy temple in Jerusalem is remembered on the Ninth of Ab, the 'holy ark in the synagogue is bare or draped in black.' Week after week Israel keeps its Sabbath. Thus Judaism remains Israel.(7)

Count Leo Tolstoi in inimitable words marvelled over this peculiar creature 'who has never allowed himself to be led astray by all the earthly possessions which his oppressors constantly offered him in order that he should change his faith and forsake his own religion.' The legacy of Israel to the world has been religion, liberty, pioneering in civilization, humanitarianism, and eternity. 'He whom neither slaughter nor torture of thousands of years could destroy, he whom neither fire nor sword nor inquisition was able to wipe off from the face of the earth, he who has been for so long a time the guardian of prophesy, and who transmitted it to the rest of the world—such a nation cannot be destroyed. The Jew is as everlasting as eternity itself.'(8)

3. *The Future of Israel*

Israel survives and lives. What will it hereafter contribute to the world's culture?

Some of the achievements of Israel in science, philosophy, law, and scholarship have been noticed in the preceding pages. But long ago leadership in these fields passed

from races and nations and groups to individuals. Individual Jews as individual non-Jews will promote these elements of civilization. In biblical science, the Christian attitude toward the Bible has necessitated the accumulation of materials, perfection of technique, and unusual scientific excellence in interpretation. Here Jewish scholarship cannot surpass Christian scholarship. In rabbinic learning Christians will continue to sit at the feet of Jewish students for some time to come. Historical criticism has of course shown that the Pentateuch is not Mosaic, is stratified, and an instance of evolution.

Its own interpreters approach the future of Israel from two angles; from the nationalist-Zionist point of view and from the purely religious and non-Zionist point of view.

Long before the days of sorrow in Russia in 1881, settlement in Palestine had been suggested by Jew and non-Jew, by Samuel David Luzzatto, Rabbi Kalischer, Benjamin Disraeli, and George Eliot. Thereupon Moses Hess, a German Jew, defined the aim of a return of Jews to Palestine to be the revival of the Jewish nation. Hence the persecuted Russian Jews became enthusiastic over the matter of a return to Palestine. The Bilu, or 'house of Jacob, come and let us go', society was organized. Baron Edmond de Rothschild lent financial assistance. Dr. Leo Pinsker suggested that Palestine should become the 'definite political home of the Jews' but Asher Ginsberg argued that 'the aim of the Back-to-Palestine Movement should be not so much the establishment of a nation like any other, but rather to permit the Jewish spirit to express itself freely and to develop in its own way.'

The influence of Theodore Herzl resulted in the Basel program of 1897 according to which 'the object of Zionism is

to establish for the Jewish people a public and legally assured home in Palestine.' During the world war, on November second, 1917, came the momentous Balfour Declaration to the effect that England 'views with favor the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people.' Since then Zion has been rebuilt.(9)

Browning in Rabbi Ben Ezra's *Song of Death* expresses the hope of Judaism to realize the fulfillment of the dream of Isaiah:

> *The Lord will have mercy on Jacob yet,*
> *And again in his border see Israel set,*
> *When Judah beholds Jerusalem,*
> *The stranger-seed shall be joined to them.*
> *To Jacob's House shall the Gentiles cleave,*
> *So the Prophet saith and his sons believe.*

The Judaism which believes in Zionism interprets the homeland as a spiritual centre. Whereas the Jewish gift to culture will be principally religious, a cultural concentration is regarded as essential to Israel's and the world's spiritual renewal.

The purely religious and non-Zionist Jewish interpretation of the future of Judaism holds that its future contribution is to be altogether in the sphere of religion through the groups of Jews distributed throughout the world. The mission of Judaism is accordingly twofold, to proclaim to the world the one and only God and his moral law as inexorable. Historical criticism has not and cannot destroy Jewish theism or the relationship between morality and religion. Ethical monotheism is still needed and ever will be by humanity. The theism advocated by Judaism is pure, that is, it does not assume an incarnation and it is simple as well.

It emphasizes God as above and beyond man, as transcendent, as King, but it also brings God near to man, regards him as immanent and experiences him as Father. It insists that there is an ultimate relationship between God and human righteousness and duty. Morality is not haphazard or accidental; it corresponds to the universe. Law is man's own achievement but also something not his own. There is an *ought* or *must* in life and God is its source.(10)

That Judaism still has something to contribute to culture is therefore the unshakeable conviction of all groups within Judaism.

4. *Understanding and Cooperation*

Israel believes in its future. Christianity believes in its future. Can Christianity and Judaism understand each other and cooperate with each other for the common good of religion?

There are historical differences which separate Judaism and Christianity. Conservative Christianity will continue to insist upon the incarnation, the Pauline interpretation of the gospel, and what the first five centuries of Christianity made of these.(11) Judaism, on the other hand, cannot accept Jesus as standing between the believer himself and God or between God and the moral law. It evaluates this life more highly than orthodox Christianity does.

But Israel and Christianity can without compromise agree in many respects. Both may be humble. Both may cultivate a sense of God and reverence in the presence of the mystery of life and of the universe. Both may recognize the imperishable value of the human personality. Both may insist upon brotherliness and the cooperative commonwealth. Both may advocate anew the ethical ideals of Amos and

Micah and Isaiah and Jeremiah and Jesus and Paul. Neither need dissent from the statement of Eliot of Harvard that 'the true test of the religious quality of a human being is really this, does he love man? If he loves man truly, he cannot help loving God, and there is no way of telling whether he loves God, except by seeing whether he loves man.' Both Judaism and Christianity believe in the law of compensation, of sowing and of reaping, of broken wings that keep men near the ground, in the difficulty of forgiveness. Christianity has granted too ready forgiveness for transgression. Yet one cannot recover the years that are gone or escape from the torture of memory. Both Judaism and Christianity may become more tolerant of different interpretations of truth. What this stricken world needs to hear again are the fundamentals of Judaism and of Christianity: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind; thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.'(12)

Through cooperation in the common tasks of community, city, state and nation, individual Christians and Jews will begin to appreciate one another. Through frank exchange of religious opinion, there should ultimately come a purging of church rituals, music, catechisms, and Sunday School leaflets from untrue and unworthy materials which modern Christians never would have placed there. Insidious discrimination in education, society, and science against the Jew should cease. Christian and Jew may with profit cultivate respect for the other's rights and personality. Possibly most significant of all, the latest Christian drama would contain less historical misstatements, if its promoters went to school to the scientific interpreters of the story of passion week.

As both Christian and Jew refuse to draw circles that shut the other out, they will help gather the world in.

Gather us in: we worship only thee;
In varied names we stretch a common hand;
In diverse forms a common soul we see;
In many ships we seek one spirit-land;
Gather us in.(13)

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NOTES

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